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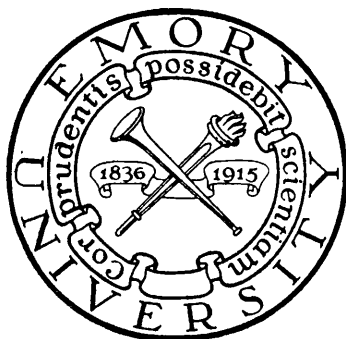
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DUKE DORGAN;

OR,

THE SILVER PENNY.

"Is this my welcome home?"—*Southerne.*

THOSE who are deservedly loud in their commendations of the gallantry displayed by British seamen during the last war, have generally been willing to admit that those supporters of the national flag whom Ireland sent to man our fleets, did not tread the decks like children. We shall, however, content ourselves with referring our readers, who may be curious on the subject, to the *Chronicles of Mr James*, or any other naval Tacitus of the day, for examples of the truth of the observation, as we wish not to encumber our slender narrative with any unnecessary historical detail.

Whether Mr James records the exploits of a certain Duke Dorgan, a young sailor from the shores of Kerry, or no, I am not aware; but it is not likely that many names have been enrolled in his pages more distinguished by a modest valour (such as contents itself with

doing all for duty and nothing for vanity), than that of the person we have just mentioned. The result of his professional exertions, and of a common-rate prudence (a rare naval virtue in the present day, and still more so at the time we speak of) was, the fortunate arrival of the young man on his native shores with a character unspotted by any act of insubordination or servility, and a quantity of prize-money sufficient, and more than sufficient, to supply the "chair days" of his life with every comfort that necessity suggested, and every luxury to which his limited experience in that way might induce him to aspire. There were circumstances, however, in his early life which, independent of any view to mere personal gratification, made him feel happy in his competence.

"You are in the right," says the author of those well-known letters published in the name of Pope Ganganelli; "engraft the Italian gaiety upon the French: it is the way to live to a hundred." In like manner might his historian say of Duke Dorgan, that he engrafted the Irishman's gaiety upon the sailor's, and produced the blossoms of the one and the fruit of the other, in such abundance, as made him highly popular among his messmates. He was, to speak in less figurative language, a lively, handsome, clear-headed, intelligent young person, with a round well-moulded frame, bright auburn curling hair, and a hazel eye of

excelling shrewdness, and when occasion required, of sparkling violence and resolution, indicating a mind of irregular strength, and a heart in which the passions had not been always subjected, notwithstanding the general even tenor of his life, to the most rigid discipline. But as the reader may observe throughout these tales an ambition to render them almost as analogous to the drama as Fielding rendered his to the epic (a circumstance in which public taste seems, fortunately, to coincide with our inclination), we shall allow our hero to introduce himself, in the fashionable manner, in the course of an incidental scene which took place on the evening when his vessel arrived in the offing of Loup Head, the well-known point of land which forms the northern extremity of the shore that bounds the queen of Irish streams.

This part of the coast is remarkable for some wild and striking points of scenery, similar, in its general character, to those by which nearly the whole range of the south-western coast is distinguished. The traveller is struck by the boldness and ruggedness of the lofty cliffs which oppose their rocky strength to the waves of the Atlantic, and by the magnitude of the caverns underneath, which, previous to the late vigorous exertions made by the guardians of the revenue, afforded a number of useful natural warerooms to the contrabandists who traded to and from the

Flushing coast, and served at the same time as lurking-places to the seals, the hunting of which constituted, at that period, one of the chief sources of profit to the fishermen of the neighbouring villages. At a small distance from the Light-House which is erected at the head, there stood, during the war, one of those signal towers, by which telegraphic intelligence was transmitted round the Cape, as far as Cork, whenever a hostile sail ventured within the influence of an Irish breeze in the offing; and still farther in the direction of the river's source was the village of Kilbaha, whose commerce consisted then, as well as at present, in turf, transmitted by boats to the interior of the country. The coast is very thickly inhabited, and the people yet preserve in a great degree the primitive and natural manners of their progenitors. They talk Irish—kill fish—go to sea in canoes—traffic in kind—eat potatoes and oaten bread—and exercise themselves in offices of kindness and hospitality towards strangers. This latter virtue has, however, in some parts of the region suffered injury from the efflux of bathers from the interior in the summer season, which taught them the use and convenience of ready money, in preference to their patriarchal modes of payment; and gave them, unfortunately, a more decided impression of its value than was consistent with the general character of Munster cottagers.

The effect appears to have been similar to that which the liberality of English travellers has produced on the continent.

But that portion of the county which constitutes the extreme south-west, and which is almost cut off from the remainder, by the large creek or bay of Scagh, which reduces it almost to a peninsula, presents a very remarkable contrast, in the condition and moral character of its inhabitants, to all the rest of Munster—perhaps we might say, Ireland. The country, though exceeding bleak and wild at first sight, is found on further acquaintance to be well cultivated, producing oats, potatoes, and flax in considerable quantities. On ascending any eminence and looking around, the land appears to the traveller to be little better than one lonely waste of bog, the huts or mud cottages being of the general colour of the soil, and scarcely distinguishable from it, while the whole wears a dull and monotonous hue, to which the numerous turf-reeks scattered over the landscape contribute in a great degree. On closer observation, however, he begins to discern innumerable clusters of wigwam mud cabins, some of an unusual size, with thatched bee-hive roofs, corded so as to provide against the winter storms. The inhabitants are all of one class; scarcely a single dwelling-house of what is termed a respectable appearance existing in the neighbourhood of the cottager—

“To shame the meanness of his humble shed.”

They are contradistinguished from Irish landholders in general by their apparent poverty and real wealth (many a tenant of clay walls being able without much inconvenience to give a dowry of some hundreds to his daughter)—as well as by their regular persevering industry, their extreme ignorance, their want of curiosity in all speculative matters, and their perfect unacquaintance with those popular themes of debate which set all the rest of the island by the ears. They till their gardens quietly, as their fathers did before them—learn little and care for less—obey their priest in all reasonable matters, and pay him like princes—go to market with their oats and potatoes—eat, drink, dance, laugh, sleep, and die. They have no tyrants, no proctors, no middlemen, no demagogues, no meetings, no politics. Under whatever standard the horn of insurrection is sounded through other parts of Ireland, whether under Rock, his lady, Starlight, Moonshine, or Moll Doyle, its echo dies into silence long before it has reached the peace-accustomed ears of this primitive people. Limited in their desires still more than in their enjoyments, the political condition of the country affects them but little, and they are silent even on the eternal topic of Catholic emancipation. What is of the utmost advantage, so far as the peace and good order of the community is concerned, there are very few idle young men in the country, as the tillage of their gardens

during one portion of the year, and the preparing of sand manure, of turf, marketing, and making *kelp* on the coast during the remainder, compel them to labour hard and continually. The tone of mind which the people display is certainly not in accordance with the magnificent natural wonders which abound on the coast, and of which the reader will find some sketches, at their appropriate places, in the body of the tale.

If, however, the object of all improvement in science or knowledge be to increase the happiness of men, it is very questionable whether it would be acting the part of a friend to this people to wish that they should be deprived of the bliss of ignorance and comfort in which they are at present shrouded, so far at least as the luxuries of life are concerned. Certainly, we express no inimical sentiment in hoping that it may be long before they are split and sundered into the unsocial distinctions of rank—before they prefer elegant poverty to humble comfort—before a selfish landlord (no unprecedented occurrence) shall scatter the peasantry from their happy, lowly homes, and yeomanize the soil.

On the evening when Dorgan's ship stood towards the mouth of the river, the inmates of the signal tower before mentioned were endeavouring to quicken the tardy-gaited hours of sunset by all the contrivances which their tastes and opportunities could enable them to

use. The lieutenant of the water guards was quietly seated in his apartment, sipping a rumbler of what he called *stiff* punch, with his waistcoat thrown open, his legs stretched out, and a cooling sea breeze just fanning the long hair that shaded his red and jolly countenance. In the room underneath were two sailors at draughts and grog, while outside the open window, seated on a wooden form, and basking in the evening sun, were a number of the guards chatting with two or three rosy-cheeked girls who sat near them, blushing and smiling in all the conscious finery of clean caps and ribands, and mincing out their few phrases of English to the best advantage, that being yet considered as a kind of holiday dialect in these districts.

"Oysay, you Paddy with the halter about your waist instead of your neck," said one of the soldiers to a lean, pale-looking, sullen-eyed, hard, straight-lipped fellow, with a few staring locks of dank hair scattered on his brow, and a hay rope tied sashwise about his person—"Oy say, can you tell us what all them 'ere papishes are doing about the shore?"

He pointed to several groups of the countrymen, women, and children, who were employed in gathering heaps of a species of sea-weed among the rocks on the water's edge, at the little bay of Fodhra; while others were kneeling in prayer at different parts of the coast. The person to whom the querist

addressed himself for information, seemed, by the more than equable indifference with which he listened to the insulting speech of the latter, to be one of those beaten down characters, to whom degradation is so familiar, that they had rather lie tamely under the most contemptuous slights than undergo the intolerable labour of supporting an independent and manly bearing. He possessed all (and more than all) the complaisance, without any of the confident and ready spirit of the Irish character—but underneath all the cringing servility of his manner, the ready obedience of eye and ear, and the musing, absent dulness of demeanour which formed the outer crust and pastry work of the man, there was in his small grey eye, mouth close shut and forming one hard line across, thin straight hair, and meagre, unfed cheek, an unpleasant depth of character, such as Julius Cæsar (that hater of lean and hungry looks), might not have loved to contemplate.

“Gatherin’ the *dhoolamaun* they are, sir,” he said, in reply to the question of the guard. “*Dhoolamaun*,” he continued, answering to the puzzled look of the latter—“that’s a kind of say-weed that they take home wit’em to boil and make greens of.”

“Make *greens* of the *sea-weed*!” exclaimed the Englishman—“Well, come—that’s a good un, however. Oy say, Jack!” addressing himself to one of the two sailors, who were still pursuing their game of draughts in a room

behind, (with the rapidity peculiar to the naval adepts in this pastime), "you come here and see what a bull Paddy has made."

"*Stall* the animal until I've done my game," replied the sailor; "I huff your man, Tom, play on."

"Well, Paddy," continued the witty protector of his Majesty's colours, "and what are those folks doing on their marrow bones along the shore? Saying mass, eh?"

"Oh, not at all, sir—none could say that only a priest. They're sayen a prayer that way, sir, o' 'count o' Candlemas-day—a great feast, or *holliday*, sir—an ould custom they have."

"Are *you* a papish, Paddy?"

"Oyeh, then, I'm nothin at all now, sir—I *was* a fish joulter, but the times are hard wit uz," said the man with inimitable simplicity.

"A fish jolter?" said the guard, "that's a sect I han't heard of. How should you like to go to sea, I say, you Irish Paddy?"

"He'd like it well enough," said the sailor, "if he could live the same lubber's life between decks, with nothing to do from morning to night but scold the cabin boy, and kick the cat into the lee scuppers. You Irish make tight sailors for all that. A king, Tom—crown him—back water there, man, you can't move your man that way."

A cry of "sail" from some person stationed overhead interrupted this refined conversation.

and drew the attention of the interlocutors to the waste of ocean which lay nursing its giant strength in a lulling calm before them. The signal was immediately hoisted on the tower, and answered by the vessel with the emblems of friendship. In a short time after, a small boat was lowered from her side, and manned for the shore. When she touched the beach, a young man in sailor's jacket and trousers, with a small bundle in his hand, leaped lightly on shore, after shaking hands cordially with each of the crew in turn. They gave him a cheer as he ascended the rocks, which he answered by waving his hat several times in the air. The draught players and the group at the Tower, all but those on guard, sauntered towards the beach, leaving the countryman who had been the object of their mirth alone at the window.

"He looked after them for some moments with a changed and darkening eye. "A sailor!" he exclaimed at length in soliloquy—"it's easy for 'em to talk, an' to laugh, an' be merry—if they were as long without vittels as I am, I'll engage 'twould be a new story wit 'em. Go to say, says he!—Why then, I declare, 'twould be a'most as good as for me to be this way always. . . If it be a man's *luck* to be shot or drown'ded, sure better that at wanst than to be ever an' always pullen ould Nick be the tail from year's end to year's end. When Duke Dorgan went to say I was glad of it, because

he left little Pennie M'Loughlen to myself, an' I thought when he'd be away that I'd have the field clear both with herself and the father. But in place o' that here I am now driven out o' house an' home, an' all that's happened Duke is to be out o' harm's way at any rate." Here he stopped and fixed his eye steadfastly on the young man before mentioned.

"There's an old saying, that if you talk o' the old boy himself, he'll appear, an' if that beant Duke Dorgan, or his ghost walken eastwards, I'm dark for certain. I'll try him nearer."

He hurried after the young sailor, who had taken the path leading towards Kibaha, and was merrily pursuing his route, chaunting in a quarter-deck key a stave of the popular song of Willy Taylor and his "lady free" casting, as he sung, a rather anxious eye toward the waste of barren heath and sand which lay between him and the interior.

"With that she called for sword and pistol
Which did come at her command,
An' she shot her Willie Taylor
With his fair one in his hand."

"I say, messmate," he said, as the countryman approached him; "can you tow me on the track of Carrigaholt?"

"The path is under your futt every step o' the way," said the man. Then after pacing behind him in silence for a few minutes—"Why, then, for one that puts out the futt so

slow, I never seen any body carry so much o' the road wit 'em, as you do, Mr Duke, Lord bless you."

"You know me?" said the other, turning and fixing his eyes on the speaker, then with an air of greater reserve, as he recognised the face; "and I ought to know you, too. That face is Pryce Kinchela's, if you haven't stole it from him."

"I wish that was all I had belongen to Pryce Kinchela about me," said the man, heavily.

"I am glad to see you, Pryce."

"I don't know whether you are or not, Duke, but I'm glad to see *you*, although you may well doubt me word. I am an altered man since you left the country, and the foolish spite that you an' I had then about Pennie M'Loughlen—(the Silver Penny as you called her, an' the Luck Penny as I called her) is no more than boy's play, to the cause I got since from others. That girl, Duke, was no Luck Penny to either you or me. After her father refused you, an' you went to sea—sure what do you think o' me but med up to her, an' if I did you'd think it was to threaten to murder her I did, the father got so wild—an' ever after he kep persecuten me right and left until he didn't lay me a leg to stand on. If you're not tired, an' would wish to rest a piece here on this rock, I'll tell you how it was."

Dorgan complied, although the lengthening

shadows on the sand and the freshening breeze of the sharp February evening advised him of the necessity of securing some place of shelter for the night. Fearful of overburthening the reader with the quaint idiom of the country, of which, perhaps, a superabundance must be thrown into these histories, I shall, while Pryce is detailing his story to our young hero, inform him in more intelligible language, of the nature of the incidents which had reduced him to his present discontented condition of mind, and furnish a slight sketch of his character, both being mournfully illustrative of the state of Munster life in his rank.

Those, perhaps, who are fond of arguing on the existence of innate propensities in the human mind, which no influence of education, circumstances, or volition can oversway, might find reason to alter their opinion if an opportunity were afforded of tracing the history of the individual nature which formed the subject of disquisition back to its earliest impulse, either toward good or evil. However casuists may assert (in the face of honesty, and common sense), that the very exertion of the will itself which induces us to adopt any evil course is a species of compulsion, which relieves us in justice from responsibility, there is not one even of those sensible fellows, who, in regretting an evil action, which he had thus under the tyranny of his own free will been compelled to commit, will dare to say to his own

secret consciousness that he *could* not have held his hand at the moment that he knowingly acted ill. As the royal astrologer, however, says of the planets, in *La vida es Sueno*, that they incline, but do not compel the conduct of men, so might it be said of the influence of the exterior circumstances of life upon the human character; and judging from the general indolence of mankind in resisting the influence of those circumstances, it might be safely conjectured that the common routine of Munster cottage life and education would produce that recklessness of blood and outrage among *any* people, with which it has of late years been fashionable to charge the inhabitants of this quarter of Ireland, as a *natural propensity*. The two individuals whom we have just introduced to our readers, presented instances to the effect of those circumstances, both in different ways. They were both taught to fight their own battles in childhood, both were instructed in the mysteries of the "Reading-made-easy," under the same hedge-school tyrant, a low ruffian who, for the small sum of two-and-sixpence, or more Hibernically speaking, three tenpennies a quarter, undertook to pull their hair, break deal rulers or (*sthrokers*) upon their little hands, lift them up by the ears for the slightest orthographical mistake, lash their naked and bleeding shins three times a day with a huge birchen rod, by way of stimulating them to greater application,

and teach them to read and write into the bargain. The manner in which the two boys acted under this treatment was very different. Pryce seldom complained, even to a school-fellow, of the torture which was inflicted on him; sometimes his lip trembled and a tear stood in his eye when the pain given was extreme, but generally the patience and fortitude of endurance which he showed, was such as to touch even the rocky heart of the Munster Dionysius with remorse. Duke, on the contrary, was a loud and noisy rebel; he kicked, plunged, remonstrated, threatened murder and assassination, and a thousand other things, which redoubled his affections, and which were forgotten by himself as soon as the latter were suspended. On three or four occasions, however, when the pedagogue had been particularly severe on both boys, he received on his way home through a wood in the neighbourhood a blow from a heavy stone, discharged by some secret hand, which never failed to draw the blood in profusion from his head, and at one time inflicted such a wound as considerably to endanger his life. His suspicions naturally fell on Duke, but to his astonishment and mortification, the clearest *alibi* was always made out for the boy, and no possible investigation could lead to the real delinquent. There was no doubt that one of his pupils was the criminal, but whoever he might be, he kept the triumph of his revenge,

contrary to the usual want of school-boys, a secret from the whole world. Duke, nevertheless, did not at any time attempt to conceal his satisfaction at the occurrence.

Another circumstance placed the dispositions of the youths in singular opposition. Among the little girls who occupied the row of round stones placed along the wall opposite to the boys, was a little flaxen-haired coquette named Penelope M'Loughlen, whose blue eyes and cherry lips had made sad work in the hearts of the young dabblers in etymology. Their affection, however, was manifested in a very different manner. While Duke fought for her, carried her over streams and ditches and treated her to an occasional "hayporth" of sugar-candy, Pryce mended her *feque*, folded her thumb paper, and taught her the analogy between C and half a griddle, H and a haggard-gait; so that like the wavering mistress of the *Two Noble Kinsmen*, her affections were divided between the manly frankness, courage, and generosity of the former, and the silent attentions and profound learning of the latter lover. As they approached the years of manhood (he is a long-lived Irishman that reaches those of discretion), the relation of the parties towards each other continued almost the same; but that of the lady to them was altered. Her heart, according as its capability of discriminating and appreciating the worth of character became more acute, inclined toward

the side of the frank and hearty Duke. He was, to use a homely but forcible metaphor which is popular in her country, "that kind of man that the wrong side of him was turned out every day," while her womanly shrewdness told her that she had not yet seen more than the sunny half of his rival. She ventured, with the due proportion of maiden reluctance and timidity, to confess this preference to the enraptured Duke, and with true filial spirit had her partiality ripened into a passion lasting and immovable, when her lover proposed for her and was scornfully rejected by her father. Duke went to sea, and Kinchela, after beating about the point with the caution which his rival's experience had taught him to use, tried his luck with no better success. It was indeed reported for some time after in the neighbourhood that his rejection had been still more unceremonious than poor Dorgan's—a rumour which was probably founded on the fact that Penny never heard the circumstance alluded to without smothering a laugh, and that the old man (who was rather fiery in his temper) sent the shoe of his right foot to be mended the same evening, with a rent about the toe, which showed as if considerable violence had been used with it. After this, Pryce had been, up to the present time, falling from cliff to cliff downward through the dark vale of adversity, until he found himself at last stretched, fairly baffled and spirit-broken, at the bottom.

"And you take it so tamely!" exclaimed the young sailor, when Pryce had come to a close,—“I would have given the fellow a rope's end at any rate, if not round the neck, across his shoulders at least.”

“Is that *all* you'd do to him?” asked Pryce, quietly.

“All! 'Tis more, it seems, than you'd do—but you were ever an' always a poor patient *slob*.”

“Was I?” said Kinchela, with a smile, the expression of which, from his turning away his head while he spoke, it was evident he did not wish to give Duke an opportunity of speculating upon. “But I believe 'tis time for us to think of parting, Mr Dorgan. If you stop in Carrigaholt to-morrow at the Beehive, you'll see me there before you, and we'll have a little more *crusheening* together, yourself and myself; I have a call to make westwards before I go.”

They parted—and Dorgan pursued his route, not without a certain feeling of contempt for the easy indifference with which his former rival sustained the spirit-rousing slights that had been cast upon him. These unpleasant feelings, however, were soon displaced by anticipations, such as might naturally be supposed to occur to a young and ardent heart on its return from a long exile to the home and the friends of his early life. He felt perfectly assured that old M'Loughlen could

not resist the influence of the wealth and honour he had acquired during many years of service, as eventful and perilous (for the deck which he trod was that which called Nelson captain), as ever an Irish seaman braved; and as he was himself eminently tinged with that "forgive-and-forget" spirit which forms one of the characteristics of his nation, he looked forward with an impatient generosity to the hour of reconciliation. He turned aside in fancy from the father's rough hand-shake and repentant greeting, to the blushing cheek and joyous eye of his now womanly P-nny, whom he pictured to himself standing bashfully behind her father, and waiting with a throbbing heart and trembling frame to meet him with a true love welcome. As he thought of those things he doubled his pace, and made the sand hills flit so rapidly behind him, that the traces of the outer coast were presently lost, and the sound of the distant waste of ocean came faint and far upon his ear.

The February evening soon began to draw to a close, and the wind, which blew from the sea, acquired a sharpness and coldness which furnished Dorgan with an additional though less sentimental reason for quickening his steps. He was almost in a solitude, the clouds began to lower and darken upon his path, while the occasional scream of a hoarse gull as it swooped around him, and with difficulty upheld its light and feathery bulk against the rising wind,

together with the dreary whistling of that wind itself, as it wafted over his head the sea foam, that was broken on the cliffs at half-a-mile distant, formed the only sounds that varied the dead monotony of the scene around him. The absence of public roads, moreover (for this was long before Mr Killala, the excellent engineer, was sent to visit this part of the country), contributed to throw an air of greater wildness and loneliness over its surface, so that Dorgan felt by no means at his ease when the darkness, which speedily banished the reflection of the last ray of sunset from the sky, left him to grope his way, without a pilot through this trackless waste of gloom. 'His eyes, accommodating their power of vision in some time to the darkness which at first seemed almost equivalent to blindness, enabled him, after a few hours' hard walking, to discover at a little distance one of those miserable huts which but too often forms the only asylum in which the poor Munster cottager can find a refuge from the tyranny of the "winter's flow." The softness of the soil beneath his feet informed him, moreover, that he had arrived on better cultivated land, while at the same time a disparting of the vapours above enabled him to discover, a few perches from the place where he stood, a comfortable looking farmhouse, with a *haggard*, stored with two or three stacks of hay and reed. Unwilling to disturb at so unseasonable an hour the

slumbering inmates of the dwelling, and uncertain, besides, of the reception he might meet with, Dorgan resolved to spend the remainder of the night in the dry and still recess formed by the grouping of the stacks. He stepped over the haggard stile, and after shaking down some of the sweet hay on the ground, he flung himself at full length on this simple natural couch, placed his bundle under his head, and was speedily lost in the wilderness of visions among which the unchained fancy of the sleeper loves to exercise her magic skill.

We cannot afford, nevertheless, to sit long idly by our hero while he slumbers, so that the reader will have the complaisance to imagine the winter-night already past, and the summons of the "early" cock shrilling in his vexed and drowsy ear. As he awoke and turned on his rude pallet, the murmuring of human voices within a few feet of the spot where he lay, arrested his attention. He listened, almost unconscious of what he was doing, and totally forgetful of its impropriety, while the following conversation passed between two speakers. The voices were those of females; one of them, from the sweetness and richness of the tones, a young—and the other, from the harshness and hard vulgarity of the accent—evidently an old woman.

"I walked," said the younger, in a tone of gentle discontent and remonstrance, "three

miles to meet you here since the day-dawn, and I must be back again and have the cows spancellor, and the milk set, and the men's breakfast ready before my father gets up; for if he knew I came to see you, he'd kill me. And here you kept me a whole hour, waiting for you."

"Don't blame me, a-vourneen," was the soothing reply; "I am an old woman, and you're so young, that your blood is running yet like cherry-brandy in your veins. When you see as much of the harm that's done in the day-light as I have, darlen, you won't be in such a hurry to shorten the night as you were this mornen."

"Well, let us say no more of it. You told me last night, before my father came in and found you in the kitchen, that you could tell me secrets that nobody knew but myself."

"What else did I get my gift for? When I was an infant at the breast, my mother *gay* me, by the directions of an *apparishun* that she seen, three drops of a cow's first milk after calving, before the young came a near her, and that's the reason the gift is upon me now."

"Tell me, then," (and here the girl hesitated a moment, "tell me," till I try you. Have I a sweetheart or no?"

It needed not a ghost come from the grave to solve this profound question, and so thought Duke Dorgan, as he recognised in the elder-

female, from the tenor of the conversation, one of a class of idle and worse than idle characters. Their trade it was, and is (though the increasing knowledge of the peasantry in other parts of the country has rendered their profits much less considerable than they were), to wander from house to house, defrauding silly cottage girls, and, rumour asserts, some silly men too, of their hardly-earned monies under the pretence of giving them a fi'-penny or a ten-penny peep into futurity, according to the length of their purses and their curiosity. The means which these worthies most commonly used to arrive at a knowledge of "coming events" was some mystical calculation on a pack of cards; and instances have fallen within the circle of our own experience where those "Card-drawers," as they are popularly termed, were permitted and invited to exercise their skill in gull-catching in other than cottage company. But to continue our tale.

"Reach me your hand, darlen," said the card-drawer, "ont'l I feel your pulse a piece." There was a pause of a few minutes when she resumed. "The blood beats warm, but it doesn't come from the heart. Your heart is not your own, and the boy that has it is far away from you."

A gentle exclamation of astonishment from the young inquirer showed that the card-drawer had judged right.

"Tell me news of him," was the next request, made in panting eagerness; "if it be good, I will give you another half-crown."

"Oy, indeed!" said the card-drawer, with an affected indignation, "as if all the silver in your purse, although it was as long as the king's, that they say if you held one end of it and I held another, we never 'ud meet, would make bad good, or good bad." Here Dorgan heard the shuffling of a pack of cards.

"We'll try what it is, any way. Draw a card, an' face the east, what is it?"

"The king o' diamonds."

"Gondoutha! Good. Draw again. Well?"

"The ace o' hearts."

"Allilu! better and better again, why, draw once more."

"The Queen o' spades."

"That's yourself. All good. Your lover is comen home with a sight o' money, and as fond of you as ever."

"I thank you, and you're a good creature," said the young female, in accents that were broken by the agitation of delight. "Hush! I hear something stirring near us. Good morning, the sun is high, and I'll be killed if my father finds me out, when he gets up."

"Stay one moment a-gra-gal. You forget that trifle you wor talking of. 'Tisn't for the sake of the lucre I'd talk, but as we wor mentionen it at all—"

"Oh, the half-crown? I had quite forgot it,

I declare. Here it is, my good woman. If what you say comes to pass, I will make that a great deal more; if you have been only deceiving me because I am young, and my heart foolish and credulous, may heaven forgive you for it! it would be doing no better than to put a blind man on a wrong path."

"An' there is few that would do that, a-colleen," said the card-drawer, as turning full within Dorgan's sight, while he heard the young girl, whom she had been duping, trip lightly through the rushes, she put the piece of silver in a corner of her handkerchief, made a knot about it, and thrust it into her dark and withered bosom. Before she discovered him, as he lay stretched on the hay, our hero had a full opportunity of observing her face and figure; and as forming one of a class of persons who exercised a considerable influence over the minds of the peasantry of her country, the reader perhaps will allow us to present a brief sketch of what he saw, in defiance of Meg Merrilees and all her bony sisterhood.

It is almost impossible to conceive how so many shreds and rags could hang together as composed this woman's dress. There did not appear to be two square inches about her in one piece, and her whole costume shook in the morning wind like the foliage of a tree, yet she had even a warm and comfortable look. Duke never saw in his life before such a mountain of rags. How they were all united puzzled

him more than the mystery of the tides of Negropont did the Stagyrite. Her shoes, or more properly (if they must have a name) her *brogues*, were in pieces, yet her feet were perfectly covered—partly with straw thrust into the fissures made in the leather, and in part with the fragments of an old woollen stocking. To find a name for each article of clothing which she wore would have been impossible. She had, to speak truly, neither gown, nor petticoat, nor cloak, yet clad she was from top to toe, and that fully. It seemed as if her dress had been built up about her from the ground of all manner of fragments. Her head-dress as it was simple, was less equivocal than the rest of her costume. It consisted of a large red and yellow handkerchief, under which her gray hair rolled up on something similar to what ladies called a *Johnny*, and was fastened so as to present an appearance like that of a very low *tete*; two corners of the kerchief were tied under her peaked and lengthened chin, while the others were suffered to flutter in the wind, or hang idly over the back of her head. Over her right shoulder was thrown a number of hare, kid, and rabbit skins, together with a bundle of unclarified goose-quills, both of which she had picked up in her peregrinations for a trifle, to dispose of them at a due profit to the skin and feather merchants of St John's Gate, in Limerick, this forming the ostensible calling under cover of

which she carried on her more lucrative trade of "card drawin'," or telling of fortunes.

The features of the card-drawer were calculated by their expression to aid her considerably in the efforts which she made to acquire an influence over the weak credulous minds of those who were accustomed to consult her. The small weasel eyes, set at an extraordinary distance from each other, in which a person of common penetration could have discovered nothing more than the light of that "crooked wisdom," usually denominated cunning, which is so useful to persons of her profession, seemed to her wondering dupes to be full of a piercing sagacity, and a certain mysterious lustre which made their hearts stir uneasily within them. Her forehead was broad and tanned by continual exposure to the weather; her nose flat and yet large, presenting, together with the disagreeable breadth of space, of which it formed the centre between the eyes, something of the cast of countenance for which that race of Italians are remarkable, who are said to be the direct and lineal descendants of the Romans. Her mouth appeared to be otherwise occupied than in affording Duke an opportunity of observing its proportions, for it was fast shut upon a pipe, the bowl of which was fastened on the barrel of a quill, that being a more capacious conductor of the comfortable fume than the narrow earthen tube originally affixed to it.

She started when she saw Dorgan stretched

on his hay couch between the stacks, and gazing steadily on her. "Why, then, heaven bless you, child, but that's a dhroll place for you to be lyen: is it all night you wor out that way?"

"Tell me," said Dorgan, rising and taking his bundle, without attending to, indeed, without hearing her question—"who was that young girl that I heard speaking to you just now?"

"I'm afeard," said the card-drawer, looking at him askance with one of her eyes, "you're in a greater hurry to hear that than I am to tell you. Would you make a betrayer o' me?"

"Not I, indeed," said Duke, "nor do I wish you to answer the question, if there be any confidence between you and her."

And turning on his heel, he was going to jump on the stile, leading to the common footpath, when the old woman called to him.

"Easy a while, sailor! Would you like to have a body tell your fortens?"

"My fortune?" said Duke, with a laugh—

"Go, you old rogue; do you think I'm one of your woodcocks? How would a sinner like you (if it isn't judging you—but we're all sinners) come into the knowledge of heaven's secrets?"

"Oyeh, who pretends to any knowledge of 'em? I'm sure I don't. I see nothen—I hear nothen—I know nothen. 'Tis all in this pack o' cards, it is—you draw for yourself—all I'll

do, is to tell you what it is—I know no more o’ you than you do yourself, till you draw, an’ then the cards ’ll tell us.”

Although Dorgan had very little of the superstitious credulity which is common to most sailors in his composition, he was not destitute of a certain portion of youthful curiosity. He paused a moment, his hand resting on the stile while he surveyed the old woman with a gaze of mingled condescension and smiling incredulity.—“And what must I pay for your nonsense, old lady?”

“May I never die in sin, if I’d ask any more genteel and off-hand, than that dollar that’s dangled be the ribbon to the breast o’ your coat.”

“Dollar!” Dorgan exclaimed with another loud laugh, “You exorbitant hag! Would you have me sell you my laurels? This is my Trafalgar medal.” And he gazed on it with an eye in which fondness and pride were mingled.

The card-drawer drew back respectfully, and curtsied to the very ground. “If you were one of Nelson’s sailors,” said she,—“that great lord, that all the world is in mourning for, this way, I’ll take nothen from you. Here draw your fate, an’ welcome.”

“I will,” replied Dorgan—“but not gratis, my good woman. Here,” putting a half-crown into her hand, and assuming a more cordial manner (which I request my reader

will not attribute to the flattering humility of the card-drawer's demeanour)—“put up this—and let me draw my fate, as you call it.”

“The heavens bless your honour; face the east, sir. Well, what have you drawn?”

“A scoundrelly, bandy-legged knave o’ clubs.”

“I am sorry for you, young man,” said the card-drawer, in a tone of deep concern. “Draw again, sir, and hope for better luck. Well, what card is that?”

“The same squint-eyed knave, as I’m alive. Is there ill-luck in the fellow’s phiz?”

“You must draw three cards, before I can answer any questions. Here!—there is but one other chance between you and a very ill fortune. Well, is there any better luck, now?”

Dorgan drew a third time, and started back when he looked on the card, as if he had seen a ghost.

“I insist,” said he, vehemently, “on seeing the pack—there are none but knaves o’ clubs in your hands.”

“O shame an’ sorrow, *asthora-ma-chree*, why should you say such a thing as that?—See, yourself. Isn’t that a fair an’ honest pack o’ cards? ’Tisn’t to draw the knave o’ clubs agin you done, is it?”

“I’ll be hanged if I haven’t, though,” said Duke, troubled and fretted in spite of himself at the singular coincidence—which he perhaps

too readily believed to be uncontrived on the part of the old woman.

"You'll be hanged if you *have*, you ought to say," she replied, assuming a solemn earnestness of tone and look.

"I *will* be hanged, then," said the sailor—"for there is the card."

"Whoever you are," the card-drawer replied, after shaking her head, and looking seadfastly at him for a **few** moments, "you are a free-handed, spirited boy, an' my heart within me is sorry for you. If you left your ship for fear of a sailor's grave, you may return to her again, for your doom is not to be upon the waters. There's a threaten of a voylent an' a shame-death in the card you drew. If you have a spite agin any body, or if it be a thing any body would have the likes agin you, I tell you, an' warn you to beware an' look about you.—Feel your way before you, for a black doom is waiten for you. Once more I advise you, look well to yourself, an' dare quietly wit all people. Good mornen to you, lad, and heaven send you better ~~work~~ then you're promised—an' a rough road, porcupine saddle, an' a high-trotten-horse to all your inimies." And so saying, the old woman concealed the cards in some part of her dress, and hurried through the haggard, muttering as soon as she passed out of hearing, "There **why!** May be I didn't make you pay for your peepin, for once. He has something to think

of now to keep his mind from harm, any way." Although we have before said that Duke Dorgan was by no means feeble-minded, or idly credulous, it would be claiming for him, perhaps, a vigour of intellect which is but little characteristic of the members of his class of society, in any country in the world, if we asserted that he was incapable of being at all influenced by circumstances so singular and impressive as those which he had just undergone. The coincidence in the thrice-selected card (in which, probably, the more penetrating reader can discover nothing farther than the roguish dexterity of a cunning old beldame) if it did not appear to him as a really supernatural occurrence, at least made him think very deeply on the subject, and mingled itself with her explanation and prophecy, to which it imparted a strangely corroborative weight. We might appeal to the experience of many of our most philosophical and apathetic readers, to say, whether they have not often found trains of thought or feeling which they at first assumed in indifference or in jest, grow and fasten on their attention, in a degree which was entirely the reverse of trifling or agreeable. In like manner fared our hero; the longer he dwelt on the card-drawer and her prophecy, the more ill at ease he grew, until at length he wished, from the bottom of his heart, that he never exchanged a word with her. He was astonished at the feverish state of mind which

very speedily grew upon him. —“I don’t believe a word of it,” he said, remonstrating with himself—“and as to the old woman herself of course she is an impostor. I should be worse than an idiot to be at all influenced by anything she could tell me—nor am I—but yet to draw that long-nosed knave o’ clubsthrice times! No matter! time will tell.”

He sprang lightly over the stile, and, bundle in hand, speedily lost recollection of his morning adventure in the varieties of the scenes through which he passed, on his route towards his native village, and the home of his love. The country around him was level, boggy, and uncultivated, with but scanty exceptions; and the occasional companions of his journey were the blue stocking’d fish-jolters, from the neighbouring villages of Beltard and Quern (famous for the delicious turbot which philanthropically incarcerate themselves in the fishing nets, for the benefit of the gourmards of Clare and Limerick).

The rough-looking merchants who dealt in such delicious ware beat on their rough-coated asses, as they staggered under the weight of their well furnished *cleaves* or panniers, and diversified the monotony of the sweet and wholesome sea air, with what Trinculo would call a “most ancient and fish-like smell.” Now and then, too, a pig-jobber, distinguished by his weather-proof air, his ponderous frieze great coat, with standing collar, forming a

strong wall of defence up to the very eyes—his wide waste of cape, and his one spur fastened upon the well-greased brogue, vouchsafed a “Save you kindly,” as he trotted by; and a carman seated side-wise on the back of a horse, (whose bony ribs bespoke him innocent of the luxury of oats)—with his feet on the shaft, a cart-whip tied sash-wise about his person from shoulder to hips, a dingy straw-hat flung “on three hairs” of his head, heavy woollen waistcoat, bundle-cloth shirt thrown open at the neck, and light streamers of grey riband fluttering rakishly at the knees of his corduroy small clothes—hospitably invited him to take a seat on the corner of his car, loaded as it was with full-bounds of butter, or bags of oats for the inland markets.

Duke was tempted to loiter so much on his way, that the sun was past its meridian height for some time before he entered the village of Carrigaholt, within little more than a mile of which Mr M'Loughlen, the father of his beloved Penny, resided. He had previously come to the determination of allowing himself one evening to recruit his spirits and recover his good looks, before he should present himself at the farm-house. Though he had but little vanity himself, and had a reasonable share of confidence in the affections of his love, he had lived long enough among mankind to know that even our best and nearest friends are seldom so purely disinterested as not to

acknowledged an involuntary and tacit subjection to the influence of appearances. Penny, he conjectured (and he did not think the worse of her for the suspicion) would not like him the less in his smart new jacket and trousers, with a light India silk handkerchief about his neck, and the wearying effects of long travel flung from him by a night's repose. The old gentleman, he was certain, would be much better pleased to see him in respectable trim, and he was conscious, moreover, though he did not make this one of his ostensible motives, that he would not be the less satisfied with himself for appearing *point device*.

The village, as he entered it, appeared almost deserted, the masters of the families not being yet returned from their daily toil on the river which flowed near them. The doors of the houses were, for the most part, shut fast and hasped, which circumstance, together with the stillness of the streets, in which he only heard the voices of some ragged children at play among the turf kishes, and the occasional inhospitable growling of some hairy cur (who was afraid to venture on a bark of open defiance or hostility in the absence of its human protectors), gave something of a holiday air to the scene. Between the occasional breaks in the row of houses on one side, the broad and sheeted river presented itself to his eyes, its surface agreeably diversified by the dark and red-sailed fishing boats, turf-boats, and large

merchant vessels which floated on its bosom, and the shadow of a passing cloud on its green and sunny waters.

As he proceeded through the village in search of the house which Kinchela had indicated as a rendezvous, he observed the sign boards of two rival public-houses, swinging at either corner of the street, at a spot where it was intersected by two cross roads.

Both were distinguished by those whimsical devices and mottoes, used generally in Ireland for the purpose of exciting mirth in the hearts of the passengers—those adepts in the human character, the innkeepers, being made aware by long experience, that next to passionate grief, nothing inclines a man more strongly to look for good liquor and good company, than a train of good humour once set on fire within his heart. One of those signs presented the appearance of a pewter drinking vessel imprisoned within the grating of a strong gaol, under which the following lines were written in a bold dashing hand:—

“Ye jovial fellows that pass along,
Behold me here, in prison strong,
For Four Pence I in chains do lie,
Release me quickly, or I shall Die.”

On the rival sign-board, the Muse of painting had delineated the effigy of a bee-hive, which had likewise its appropriate jingle contributed by her sister deity:—

“ Within this hive
We're all alive;
Good liquor makes us funny—
If you are dry
As you pass by,
Step in and taste our honey.”

With the latter invitation our hero complied, leaving the liberation of the captive on the other side to the next village Howard who might cast a humane eye in that direction, moved less, however, by the prospect of the promised honey within, than the expectation of meeting here his old acquaintances before-named.

He found the house unoccupied by any but the *publican* or landlord, who was seated, in a hay-bottomed chair, by the whitening embers of a turf fire, dandling one foot softly in the air, and luxuriating in the delights of a well-filled pipe, which he interrupted only at intervals, for the purpose of giving some directions to a slatternly girl, who was seated on her heels at one end of the room, scouring the pewter glories of the dresser with a *wisp* of hay and wet sand. He received Dorgan with the respect and attention which are peculiarly the right of all naval and military sojourners at places of amusement, ushered him into the boarded parlour, and answered readily all the questions which he put respecting the present condition of M'Loughlen, whether he still lived with his daughter, in the same lonely house which they occupied a great many years before,

and many other inquiries more interesting to him, in all probability, than they would be to the reader.

The landlord was at length summoned to attend a customer at the bar, and Duke was left to "discuss" (as the phrase is) his whisky and-water (or to give it the provincial term, his whisky-punch) alone. Although Irishmen have long lain under the imputation of a fondness more intense than is consistent with the character of a well-deserver, for the excitement of strong liquor, I believe the affection which subsists is rather that which we entertain for a pleasant acquaintance, whom we are happy to meet in mixed company, than that which we feel towards a friend with whom we can consume whole hours in solitary communion (if this expression may escape uncensured by English judgments). Dorgan in particular, who was unprofessionally and unnationally abstemious, felt little pleasure in continuing, while he awaited the arrival of his friend, to sip the diluted fire which stood before him. He looked around the room for something to amuse his thoughts, which were flowing too rapidly upon him to suffer that he should remain still, until Pryce made good his appointment; and after turning over a few old books of farming, tattered volumes of law, and rudimental works, a scrap-book fell into his hands, in which he found the following verses written, in all probability, by way of practice in penmanship.

Although the sentiment was expressed in language, perhaps, a little too fine for his sympathy, the analogy which it bore to what might have been his own fate, interested him sufficiently to make him read the stanzas through.

THE JOY OF HONOUR.

The tears from these old eyelids crept,
When Dermod left his mother-land,
And I was one of those who wept
Upon his neck, and press'd his hand,
He did not grieve to leave us then,
He hop'd to see his home again;
With honours twin'd in his bright hair,
He *could* not hope to gather there.

II.

Year after year rolled fleetly on—
Lost in the grave of buried time—
And Dermod's name and praise had won
Their way into his parent clime;
But all his youthful haunts were changed,
The wild wood perished where he ranged;
And all his friends died one by one,
Till the last of Dermod's name was gone.

III.

I sat one eve, in Curra's glade,
And saw an old man tottering down,
Where the first veil of evening's shade
Had given the heath a deeper brown;
His cheek was pale—his long hair now
Fell, in white flakes, o'er his aged brow,
But the same young soul was in his eye,
And I knew the friend of my infancy.

IV.

He gazed upon the silent wood,
He passed his hand across his brow,

The hush of utter solitude
 Slept on each breathless beechen bough;
 " That lake with flowering islets strewed,
 That skirts the lawn and breaks yon wood—
 I knew in youth a valley green,
 The seat of many a merry scene.

V.

" The youths that graced the village dance,
 Beneath the turf they trod are sleeping;
 The maidens, in whose gentle glance
 Their spirits lived, are o'er them weeping;
 Sorrow and blight, and age have come,
 Where mirth once reigned, and youth, and bloom,
 And the soft charms of Nature's prime
 Are blasted by the breath of Time.

VI.

" And hath the joy that honour gives,
 No power o'er memories like this?
 Ah! witless is the man who lives
 To soar at fame and spurn at bliss!
That hath been mine, *this* might have been,
 Had I but held the humble mean,
 And passed upon my parent soil,
 A life of peace and quiet toil.

VII.

" And is it thus with *all* who gain
 The phantom glory of a name?
~~That~~ ere it grace their brows, the pain
 Of their long search hath quench'd the flame
 That young ambition lit, and those
 Whose praise they sought, are at repose,
 And they stand in a world unknown—
 Admired, revered, unloved, alone!

VIII.

" I want my early playmates back,
 My friends long lost, but ne'er forgot;
 Are these old men who haunt my track,
 My school-day friends?—I know them not!

Alas! I grieve and call in vain,
Their youth will never come again;
But it is sad my heart should feel
Its first affections youthful still."

"I declare, then," said Dorgan in soliloquy, as he mingled another 'tumbler o' punch' (the first having insensibly disappeared, while he was poring studiously over the above composition), and looked musingly in the glass, only a *little* puzzled—"I declare, now, I can understand what the fellow means very well, although he has put it into that crinkum-crankum, fine spoken, gingerbread language; and I felt just the same thing myself since I came. This very landlord o' this public-house I knew at school—a wild, scatter-brained young fellow, that would box a round, or climb at a magpie's nest with any boy in the parish, and to see him now enter the room, knocking the ashes of his pipe with the tip of his little finger, hoping your honour is *convenient*, and talking on the duty on licenses and the distillery laws, as if he had never done anything since he was born but *jug* whisky punch and score double! It makes a man feel as if he were thinking of growing old, one time or another, himself. Going to 'lie beneath the turf I trod,' as this poet here says. No matter!" he continued, indulging in a more liberal draught than he had yet ventured on, "this is the way of the world—*sic transit gloria mundi*; here to-day and gone

o' Sunday. Hush! Is not this Kinchela?" He interrupted himself on hearing a voice in the kitchen outside. The speaker approached the door of the room where he sat, and entering the room without ceremony, shewed him that his conjecture was perfectly correct.

"I beg pardon, Mr Dorgan," he said, making what he considered a very courteous bow—"I'm afeer'd I *kep* you waitin, but I was obleeged to be at the Head all the mornen, gatheren the barnocks—an' I couldn't well afford to lose more than half a day to our meeten this turn."

Dorgan accepted his apology, and invited him to a corner of the board, and a share of the good things with which it was decorated. Pryce readily seated himself, but refused to drink, and when our hero pressed him hard, added vehemence to the negative.

"O come," said Duke, angrily, "I will say that you do not yet look on me as a friend if you refuse to join me in a glass. There's no salt in the liquor, and you may be my foe to-morrow, if you like."

"Pho! pho! sooner than you'd be sayen anything o' that kind, Duke," the other said, with some confusion of manner, "I'll drink the ocean dry wit you." And he filled a glass without further preamble.

After the usual commendations on the quality of the materials which went to the

composition of their popular beverage, the young men talked freely of the changes which had taken place in the affairs of the neighbourhood, dwelling on the intermediate histories of all whose fortunes were of any interest to the sailor from their association with his early life, comparing their actual fates with what might have been anticipated from his knowledge of their character in boyhood—how one was married—another hanged—one killed at a hurling match—another transported for sheep-stealing—wondering at every circumstance in turn, and at length chopping round (to use the professional phrase of one of the parties), upon the old and favourite theme of M'Loughlen and his daughter.

On this subject, Dorgan, a little stimulated by the awakened recollection of the slights cast upon him by the old farmer; and not a little, perhaps, by the absence of the Irish whisky to which he had become almost a stranger during his exile, allowed himself a liberty of speech which he had afterwards deep cause to regret. Pryce, after coinciding in the justice of his resentment, and even adding some observations calculated rather to aggravate than assuage it, suddenly changed his tone, and said in a gentle voice:—

“But although he did injure you surely, Duke, an’ that greatly, I’d like I could prevail on you to forgive and forget. Bear an’ for-

bear as we're commanded. He's an old man, an' you're a young one, an' it won't be long until the grave will draw a line between ye, that you may wish to pass, to make friends again, an' won't be able. So don't harbour any bad designs agin poor M'Loughlen, I beg o' you."

"Oh, I'll make the purse-proud old rogue know at any rate, that——" he interrupted himself, on perceiving a dark shadow thrown on the table at which he was seated. On looking up, he perceived an elderly gentleman, dressed in black, with whip and spurs, and silver buckles at his knees, standing between him and the window. He addressed Dorgan with a manner of solemn and authoritative, although very mild and dignified reproof.

"I have been listening to you," said he, "for the last few minutes——"

"Have you?" interrupted Duke, "then you have made more free than welcome, I can tell you."

"Do not condemn me as an eaves-dropper," said the gentleman, calmly, "until you are certain that I deserve the name. I did not intend to overhear you, but if I had used so unwarrantable a means to serve you, young man, you should respect your Maker more than to insult his minister."

"I really ask your pardon," said Dorgan, rising—"I was not aware of your profession, father, or I would not have used these words."

"There was a fault on both sides," said the clergyman—"however, before I go (as I only stepped in here, in the expectation of meeting a friend), I will venture to pursue the subject a little farther. I heard you speak in terms of strong resentment of one of my worthiest parishioners. There is not a man of his means and station in the country who has done more good to the poor, and to all who needed his service, than that very man. He is a fond father, a religious observer of God's law, and a friend to all—even to you—(do not start, for I know you, sir), who are no friend of his. I have often heard him mention, with deep regret, the hard language he used towards you in his younger and more passionate days, and yet this is the man whom you denounce by an epithet which it does not become me to repeat, even for the purpose of reprehending it. I would recommend to you for your own sake, and that of all in whom you have an interest, to acquire the virtue of subduing those violent resentments. Remember that the patient is better than the strong man; and he that ruleth his mind than the overthrower of cities.'"

"Well," said Dorgan, "you will not think the worse of me, for speaking my mind freely at all events."

"Ay, young man, there would be a merit in that frankness if it implied a purpose of amendment, as well as a consciousness of error.

But it is the misfortune of your countrymen and mine to imagine that open-heartedness is a virtue, even when it only consists in making a boast of guilty propensities, which other men deem it prudent to conceal. I mentioned to you the merits of him against whom you have been railing, for the purpose of shewing what a darkener of the mind and senses this private resentment is, and how it can so change the eyes and heart, as to make one man see evil, where all others can discern nought but good. It is the indulgence of this dreadful and selfish propensity, that has made the gibbets of our country groan under the burthen of so many hundreds of her young and high-spirited children. I warn you, to beware of harbouring resentment against your brother." And saying this, the clergyman left the room, followed by Kinchela, who pleaded some business with the pulican.

Dorgan remained for some time after in an attitude of stupid abstraction and amazement, not altogether occasioned so much by the reproof which he had undergone, as by the strange coincidence between the clergyman's last words and the warning given by the card-drawer on that very morning. "What!" he exclaimed at length, striking the table forcibly with his clenched fist, and speaking with much vehemence, "Are all the people mad, that they warn me at every step I take to beware of murder and the gallows? Do I

meditate bloodshed? Let me take my own heart to task. Is it that of a midnight cut-throat? It surely is not. I have never spilled one red drop of living blood in my life, but that for which I ventured my own in the service of my country. I would not set my foot on that fly that is crawling there, if it were to purchase the three kingdoms. What then do the people mean? Is my forehead stamp'd, like Cain's, with the mark of blood? Is murderer in my face? If Nature has written the word there, she lied foully, for the heart of the young lamb is not more free from the thought or thirst of violence than mine."

A little relieved by the fervour with which he thus unburthened his spirit, Dorgan prepared for his night's rest in the inn, and was shewn by the landlord into a double-bedded room, after bidding good night to Kinchela, who was to return to Loup Head early in the morning. Notwithstanding all the efforts which his companion made to banish from his memory the recollection of the double warning he had received in the course of the day, the circumstance still hung upon his mind, and troubled his slumbers. The forms of a methodical execution, the blanketed finisher of the law, the fatal cart, the tree, chains, night-cap, and all the other awful *et cetera* of a death untimely and ignominious, floated with a horrible and oppressive influence upon his brain: and he awoke just in time to save his

neck from the noose, which was all but fastened on it.

It was dark midnight; and he felt his head almost riven with a cruel ache, the result in all probability of his unaccustomed libations, together with the fatigue he had undergone the preceding day and night. Wishing to bind it round with a silk handkerchief, he stretched his hand out to the chair on which he laid his clothes, but to his great surprise found that they had been removed. He rose and groped about the room for some time in the dark, but with no better success; he was, in fine, obliged to return to his bed and sleep off the illness as well as he could until morning.

Whatever his astonishment might have been at missing his clothes during the night, it certainly did not exceed that which he felt on opening his eyes next day and perceiving them exactly in the place where he had laid them the evening before. The royal father of Badroulboudour never rubbed his eyes so often or in such astonishment, at the disappearance of the enchanted palace of his son-in-law. Kinchela had already departed; and our hero, after discharging the duty of morning prayer with somewhat more than his usual fervency, and consuming a reasonable portion of the publican's groceries, paid his bill like a man of honour, and departed.

The calmness of the morning, the fresh look of the green fields, the sweetness of the open

air, and the sight of the hills and crags where the days of his childhood had passed so merrily, contributed to wean his mind from the gloomy reflections to which the occurrences of the preceding day had given rise. Every step that brought him nearer to the dwelling of his love, made his heart bound with a freer and happier movement within his bosom, until at length the exquisite poignancy of expectation became almost too eager and tumultuous for unmixed pleasure. He passed the old school-house in the glen, the chapel, the *inch* which was used for a play-ground, and at length, on arriving at the summit of a gentle eminence, beheld the farm-house (a neat little band-box, in which his love lay treasured like one of her own new bonnets) clustered in among a grove of Scotch firs, and presenting its cheerful white-washed front to the broad face of the Shannon, from which it was only separated by a green and sloping meadow.

It was rather early when Dorgan left the inn where he passed the night, so that he was a little surprised to see a considerable number of persons collected round the door. They passed rapidly in and out of the house, and a few hastened across the fields in the direction of the village, while others passed them after a hasty greeting, and seeming to convey the tidings of some important event. On a sudden, while Dorgan continued looking towards the open door, a woman rushed from it, hurried

through the crowd, tore her cap from her head, and while her long hair fell over her shoulders, began to clap her hands, and utter the most heart-piercing screams. A terrible sensation lodged itself upon the heart of young Dorgan as he heard this fatal song, which his memory enabled him to recognise as the death-wail of his country. He was about to spring from the low hedge on which he sat, and hasten to the house, when he was stopped by a woman who had been sitting on the bank-side in the sunshine, arranging a small pack of rabbit-skins and goose-quills which she carried.

"Tee you, tee you, sailor!" she exclaimed. "Tee you! Don't go a-near the house! Are you light? They're on the watch for you. Oh, you foolish cratur, why didn't you do me bidden. I'd rather the cards to be out itself, this once, than to have such a clane, likely boy as what you are coom to any harm on the head of it."

"You infernal hag!" said Duke, turning fiercely upon her, "are *you* mad? Let go my dress. You are all mad together. What watch? Who? What do you mean?"

"You do well to be ignorant of it, 'to be sure. There was murder done in that house last night——"

"Hold!" said Dorgan, turning pale as death, and staggering forward, until he supported himself by grasping the extended arm of the card-drawer. The woman paused and looked

amazedly on him, while his head dropped upon his breast; a dreadful sickness laboured at his heart, and his brain felt as though it reeled within his head. At length, raising his eyes heavily to heaven, while his words fell from him with so faint an emphasis that the utterance of each single syllable seemed to require all the exertion his nerves could muster, he said slowly and feebly, "Great Heaven, if now, after my long absence from my native land, after all the danger through which the Almighty has preserved me, both by storm and battle,—if now, the first day of my coming home, the first day I was to meet my old friends, my first love, in health and happiness—if I am doomed to see her, after all our love, and our hopes, and our long parting, a bleeding corpse before me, I will strive to submit and bear the judgment; but do not blame me if my heart breaks under it—and if—tell me," he continued, pressing the card-drawer's arm, and panting with apprehension, while he dared not look in her face, "*Who* was murdered?"

"O thin, dear knows, sir, ould M'Loughlen was—an' I'd think that enough, an' not to go farther."

Again Dorgan paused, while his limbs shook with apprehension—"And—and—his daughter?"

"Oh, allilu! Penny is it? Oh, indeed, I wisht *himself* was as well as her, an' 'twould save her a sighth o' grief."

Dorgan covered his eyes with his hands, and leaned for some time, silent and motionless, with his back against the bank. At length, rising silently, with as much firmness as he could command, he began to move towards the house in silence.

"Don't you hear me, what I'm tellen you, child?" said the card-drawer.

"What do you say——?"

"They're all on the look-out for the murderers, and examinen 'em all right an' left—gentle and simple. Remember the knave o' clubs."

"Pooh—pooh!" Dorgan exclaimed, shaking his arm from her grasp, and hurrying towards the house.

"*Pooh*, is it?" said the indignant forestaller of the Destinies—"Shastone *pooh*! Gondoutha wisha *pooh*! That's my thanks. May be 'twould be a new story wit you before you'd leave that roof, then; an' I'd be sorry it should, for all. Well, then, I declare now," she added, crossing her hands in more composed soliloquy, "one oughtn't to be funnen on things o' that natur, at all—for see how what I did, be way of a punishment, to frighten him, is coming very near the truth after all. I declare, it's a droll thing to think of. Easy! isn't that the priest I see comen over the road? O murder alive! I'll be kilt if he sees me, after he warnen me out o' the parish last Advent." She huddled her pack hastily up, and ran along

under cover of the hedge, in a different direction from that by which his reverence, the same gentleman, under whose censure Dorgan had lain at the inn the night before, was approaching the farm.

A dreary scene awaited our young hero in the interior of the house. He passed in without attracting any notice from the crowds of persons who were too busy in hearing or telling the circumstances of the fearful occurrence which had taken place, to suffer their attention to be divided by the appearance of a stranger. In the centre of the neatly furnished kitchen, was a long deal table, on which was laid the corpse, with the clothes in which he had been found—and all the awful appearances of a violent fate which he had undergone. The grey hairs, matted and stiff, and the wrinkled features distorted with the still surviving expression of horror, and frightfully dabbled in blood, remained still untouched, unchanged—an indication that the coroner's inquiry was not yet concluded. It was, in fact, at this moment, proceeding in an interior room. In the capacious chimney corner were seated a number of old women, who declared, as they socially passed the single pipe from one to another, that the old man would make a good corpse, when the blood was washed off, and the hair combed sleek upon the brow. An old man, in another corner, was entertaining a number of wondering auditors, with an

account of a murder far more horrible than the present, which had occurred within his own memory; and farther on, were seated a circle of females, preparing, by low modulations of the death-cry, to shine in the rivalry of the evening wail. Two or three of the sincere friends of the dead man, standing near his body, perused in heavy silence, and with grief-struck features, that face which even an enemy could not contemplate, disfigured and dragged as it was in the parting agony, without an emotion of pity and forgiveness, if not remorse. One of these men was Duke Dorgan.

He learned, from the conversation of those who stood around him, that a party had entered the house on the previous evening, in pursuance, as it was said, of a threat which had been conveyed to poor M'Loughlen a short time before, warning him not to bid for a certain farm in the neighbourhood, the former tenant of which had been ejected for non-payment of rent. M'Loughlen had disregarded this menace, and in some measure brought on himself the consequences which had been laid before him. His daughter, and a little girl, his niece, were the only persons in the house at the time, and the latter alone, an intelligent child, about seven or eight years of age, was enabled to see the whole procedure, from a loft on which she usually slept. Dorgan entered the room where the coroner's inquest was held,

just as that gentleman was beginning to take down the deposition of the infant witness.

"Well, my little darling," said the coroner, "tell your story now, like a good girl. Don't be afraid of these gentleman; we are all your friends, and we'll take care that nobody shall do you any harm."

"I will, ser," said the little girl—"this was the way of it. Uncle was sitten there abroad a-near the kitchen-fire, on the sugan-chair, an' Penny was readen a chapter out o' the Bible to him, an' Tom Dooly, our boy, was out looken at the bounds, to see would any o' the Key's cows be trespassen, an' meself was just out o' my first sleep above upon the loft, over right the fire-place, whin I heard a tunderen rap coom to the back-doore."

"Very well, my girl, very good, child," the coroner said, while he continued making his memoranda—"Well? you heard a knock?"

"I did, ser. Penny dropt the book in a fright, an coom an' thrun her arms about uncle's neck. 'O murther, father! what's that, I wonder?' says Penny. 'It's the boys, I fear,' says he, 'heaven preserve my child!' says he. So he put Penny into the corner, an' then the party broke the door (I heard it crashen) an' coom in an' began *croosten* uncle with stones, while he kep 'em off wit the chair. At last, they pull't the chair from him, an' bid him go on his knees to be shot. 'O boys,' says he, 'don't take my life, an' I'll give up the farm.

'It's too late now,' says one of 'em; 'why didn't you take the warnen whin it was given you?' With that he was going to strike him with a piece of a *syse* he had in his hand, whin Penny ran, screechen out o' the corner, and tuk him by the coat to pull him away from uncle, but he threw her back agin' the wall, an' then he began cutten uncle on the head with the *syse*, till he fell back on the floore, groanen. 'You done enough now,' says one of the party that was with him, 'he never'll see day-light agen, he hasn't a kick in him.' 'I owed that much to him a long while then,' says the man, as they were goen out the doore. Uncle was stretched a'most the first blow he gave him, *an' very justly*, for it was a great stroke surely."

Here the girl began to cry and tremble, as if labouring under great anxiety. "I'll be kilt now, entirely," she said, "for there's one o' the men that murder'd uncle lissenen to me."

A general exclamation of astonishment and alarm broke from the circle at this naïve declaration. The doors were closed by the coroner's desire, and the girl was asked to point out the person whom she recognized.

"I'd be afeerd he'd kill me," she said, weeping.

"Do not fear it," said the coroner, taking her into his lap, and patting her head, "we are too strong, and too many for him. Where is he, pet?"

"There he is, standing a-nigh the table, in the sailor's clothes."

She pointed to Dorgan, who felt, while her small finger was tremblingly directed towards him, as if he were surrounded by the phantoms of a hideous dream. He could scarcely believe that the fate with which he had been so singularly threatened, was in reality to be fulfilled; and he could do nothing more than gape and stare around him, until the rough hands of two of the men present, grasping his collar, and dragging him before the coroner's chair, convinced him that the scene and the event were directly the reverse of ideal."

"This is a serious charge that is brought against you, young man," said the coroner—"What is your name?"

"Dorgan," was the reply, "I have served in his Majesty's navy, and have only arrived in Ireland the day before yesterday."

A murmuring of recognition passed among the people who crowded the room, and one of them whispered to the coroner, who nodded, as if in token of assent.

"You knew the deceased?" he said, again addressing Dorgan.

"I did, many years since."

"You owed him a spite, I believe?"

"I owe no man a *spite*. That is a coward's passion. He refused me the hand of his daughter, when I was very young, and I confess my resentment against him was strong—

"but I came home with an altered spirit, anxious to see and to be reconciled to him."

"Those were not, justice compels me to declare," said a voice behind Dorgan, "the sentiments which I heard you express towards him yesterday evening. In the parlour of the Bee-hive, I heard this very young sailor speak in terms of the vilest reproach against my poor murdered friend, M'Loughlen."

Dorgan looked over his shoulder, and beheld the clergyman with whom he had been speaking; "I cannot, nor am I anxious to deny that I did use such expressions," said he, a little confused, in spite of his consciousness of right, at the corroborative force which this unfortunate circumstance was likely to give to the mistaken testimony of the child—"but I spoke then under unusual irritation. I had been indulging a little too freely in the strong liquor that was placed before me, and might have said perhaps more than I ought."

"Ay, and *done* more than you ought, sir, perhaps from the same cause. Doctor Mahony's evidence is important, however," the coroner continued, writing.

"It would be," said Dorgan, with a sudden confidence brightening in his manner, "but that I have one witness who will decide the question of my innocence at once. There stands the landlord of the inn; he knows that I passed the night under his roof."

"I declare, gentleman sailor," said the land-

lord, affecting the euphony of the greater number of his class—"I'd prefer you didn't appale to my evijunce—I don't know who may be the perpetraathur of this horrid fact—but if I must give my judgment in the case, I must say that I *slep* in a room, the comrade o' that you hired, I heard you rise in the obscurity of the night, an' walk most surprising about the room, an' my wife testified to me that she had audience o' the doore outside openen and shutten a while before. It was a contraary thing for you to direct application to me, for I profess without maning to be litigious or factious, I have nothen commendable to vouchsafe in your favour." And so saying, with the air of a Dogberry, the eloquent host retired from the gaze of the crowd into his former place, satisfied that he had impressed the company with the highest respect for the perspicuity and elegance of phraseology which he displayed.

There was no other witness to his *alibi*, who might not have been imposed upon by the same appearances, and Dorgan felt as if a net were weaving around him, from which he should in vain seek to disentangle himself.

"All those circumstances become more important as they corroborate each other," said the coroner. "I am afraid, young sir, that it will task your ingenuity hard to bear you safely through them all."

Dorgan paused for a moment, and pressed his hand on his brow in deep agitation. At

last, starting from his reverie with a sudden and passionate vehemence—"Let Miss M'Loughlen be called," he exclaimed. "She saw the murderer, she is your first witness. Let her come quickly, or my life will be drivelled away by fools and children."

"You would do well, sir," said the coroner, after requesting the clergyman to go for the unhappy girl, "to measure your language by the circumstances in which you are placed. The ground on which you stand does not appear to be the firmest possible."

"Peace, and be silent!" cried Dorgan, fiercely and loudly. "The ground on which I stand, is the ground of my own innocence, and that I will maintain after my own fashion."

"I hope you will prove it tenable," said the coroner.

"If it be undermined by others, in malice or in wanton negligence," said our hero, "may the ruin fall on the heads of the contrivers."

"Amen!" was the reply.

The throng at the door-way here separated, and Dorgan's attention was rivetted by an object of new and engrossing interest. The priest entered, supporting on his arm the slight and drooping figure of a young woman of an excelling beauty both of face and person, although the effect of the terrible shock which she had undergone, considerably abated the fresh and healthy bloom that was the legitimate property of the former. She was dressed in -

plain dark cotton gown, with a blue silk riband tied simply around her well-formed head, while her light and polished curls shaded her pale features, and her deep blue eyes were fixed on the ground with a strong effort at the calmness of resignation, as the clergyman whispered some words of encouragement and comfort in her ear. A dead silence took place as soon as she made her appearance, which continued until she had been conducted to a chair near the centre of the room.

Dorgan, after pausing for some time, in order to muster all his strength of mind, walked towards his love, and taking her hand, while she seemed scarcely conscious of the action, in his, said gently, "It is a sad meeting that has been reserved for us, Penny; but do you not know me?"

The poor girl had not from the time of the murder up to the present moment, indulged in any of those salutary bursts of grief, in which the loaded heart finds safety from breaking when it is oppressed with sorrow too mighty for its narrow limits to contain. The more violent, therefore, was the rush of passion, when a channel was at length afforded, by which the long pent-up and accumulating agony was enabled to discharge itself. When she recognized her lover, uttering a shrill and piercing shriek, which darted like an electric shock through the nerves of the hearers, she flung herself upon his neck, and hung in a con-

vulsion of mingled tears and sobs around him. Dorgan supported and endeavoured to soothe her, while his own tears flowed in abundance, and the eyes of many of the company shewed that their hearts were not proof against the suddenness of the appeal made to them.

"Oh, Dorgan, my own true friend, are you come indeed?" she exclaimed, gazing in his face, as if to be assured that she was not giving to a stranger the welcome that was *his* right. "Oh, Dorgan, I hoped that I should have the happiness to see you both friends once more, for he often and often spoke of you, and longed for your return, to tell you that his heart was changed; but you have come to see a greater change than that. Cold enough his heart is now, Dorgan, towards you and all. He will not press your hand if you take it now. Oh, do not blame me, father," she exclaimed, as she caught the clergyman's eye fixed on her with an expression of reproof, "I am wrong, I know I am; but my heart will break if I do not give it words."

"My own love, take comfort," said Dorgan, pressing her hand and speaking low to her, "You have lost a kind and good parent, but you are not yet an orphan; I will be a father, and friend, and brother to you, while I live. Try and be composed, like a sweet girl."

Few exhortations are attended with more influence than those which proceed from the lips of those we love. The interests of two

hearts, united like those of our hero and his mistress, are so closely blended, so perfect and harmonious an understanding exists between them, that an admonition, addressed from one to the other, is received with as ready a deference as a suggestion of its own will. The effect, which all the remonstrances of her graver and more venerable friends failed to produce, was brought to pass in an instant, by the few words which Dorgan addressed to her; and Penny prepared herself to give evidence in some composure, while Dorgan, once more leaving her side, resumed his place near the table.

Pennie detailed the circumstances of the murder in nearly the same words as her little cousin, until she came to that part of the transaction at which she was said to have flung herself between her father and the assassin.

"You must have had an opportunity, then," said the coroner, "of observing him very closely. Will you have the goodness to look round the room, and see whether you can recognize him among those people?"

"I do not think I could know his face again," she said; "it was blackened at the time."

"How was he dressed?" inquired his worship.

"I think in sailor's dress, like Dorgan's," she said, carelessly.

"You do not think it was *I*, then?" said Dorgan, smiling.

"You!" replied the girl, pausing as if to comprehend his question; "I should sooner say that it was his own act, or as soon."

"If we have wronged you by an unworthy suspicion," said the coroner to Dorgan, "you must blame the circumstances and not us, for they are more than sufficient to warrant us in looking well to the case. Are you quite certain, Miss M'Loughlen, that this was not the man whom you withheld from the deceased?"

"Certain that Dorgan did not murder my father? Am I certain of my existence? I would stake a thousand lives if I had them, that Dorgan would not have stirred one of the grey hairs upon his head, in enmity, if it were to make him master of the universe."

"My own sterling girl!" exclaimed Dorgan, delighted far more by her ready confidence, than by the safety which it procured him; "when all are turned against me, I have, at least, one friend in you; for you of all the world have ever known my heart."

"The coincidence is still very strange," said the coroner; "pray, Miss M'Loughlen, was there no mark—no peculiarity of appearances about this sailor, by which you might recognize him again if you should meet him?"

"My memory had nearly deserted me," replied the young woman. "When he flung me from him, I grasped something which was

hanging to his coat, and brought it away with me in the struggle. It is this," she added, handing to the coroner a piece of silver with a blue riband attached to it.

"This, indeed, is a most providential and important circumstance," said the latter, "and will do more to further the ends of justice, perhaps, than many living evidences."

The condemned wretch, who, after having his ears greeted with the gladdening tidings of a reprieve, is informed that the news were communicated under a mistake, and that he must still tread the road to the fatal tree, may imagine what Dorgan felt when, on swiftly lifting his hand to the breast of his coat, he found that his Trafalgar medal was missing; and that, in fact, the piece of silver which the coroner held was no other than it. He paused for some time, in utter ignorance and anxiety as to what his best mode of procedure would be on the occasion. He saw, in one rapid glance, all the fearful consequences of asserting his claim to the medal, but he felt anything like an attempt at concealment would (even though it might afford him time to secure his life against the effects of an erroneous suspicion), at least, have the consequence of branding his name with ignominy for ever in his native land, and Dorgan preferred his chance of hanging to that.

"I am sensible," said he to the coroner, in a low voice, "of all the injury which I may do

myself by the avowal I am about to make; but I trust that all possibilities may be taken into account. How that medal can have come into Miss M'Loughlen's possession, I have not the remotest idea; but it is mine—the badge of distinction which all received who did their duty on the waves of Trafalgar.”

“I really hope,” said the coroner, after the murmur of astonishment and strong interest occasioned by this admission had subsided—“I hope you are mistaken. This affords too frightful a confirmation of the circumstances already recorded against you.”

“In that,” replied Dorgan, “I am unfortunate, as many a brave fellow was before me. The medal is mine, however; I won it in honour, and will not disown it like a coward.”

“I am sorry for you,” said the coroner. “Keeper!” he beckoned to the person who held that office in the neighbouring bridewell—“Hand-cuff your prisoner.”

“Prisoner!” exclaimed Pennie, turning pale as death, and rushing between Dorgan and the bridewell-keeper—“What prisoner? Why would you hand-cuff Dorgan our best friend?”

“You would alter that opinion, Miss M'Loughlen,” continued his worship, “if you knew that this young man was heard last night to utter the most violent language against your father—that he was heard to enquire respecting the number of people living in his house—that he was heard to leave his bed during the

night, in the house where he slept, to which he returned before morning—and that now, to crown and to confirm all, he avows this medal, which you tore from the murderer's dress, to be his own."

"An' if he couldn't swear to it, *I could*," exclaimed the inn-keeper, "for I saw it with my own eyes dangle at his breast as he was going to bed."

"It's all a dream, a wild, improbable, impossible story," exclaimed the girl, with passion. "Deny it, Dorgan, and tell them they belie you."

"The circumstances which they have told you, my dear Penny," said Dorgan, while she hung on his words as if to gather from their meaning the tidings of life or death, "are all true. I did make these inquiries. I did speak in foolish anger against our murdered friend, and that medal is indeed mine; but yet, Penny—Penny!" he reiterated as he felt the bewildered girl recoiling with an expression of vague and uncertain horror from his grasp, "I am innocent of this."

"It cannot be," said Penny; both cannot be. Say—oh, Dorgan, say once again that this is not your medal. My brain will burst if you do not say it."

"I love your happiness well, my poor girl," said Dorgan, looking on her with much greater pity than he felt for his own fate, "and I love my own life and character also; but I love

truth better, and the truth I have told you all. Will you forsake me now, and leave me here all alone?" he added mournfully, as she struggled to free herself from him.

"Don't hold my hands, Dorgan! Drag—pluck me from him," she continued, beckoning rapidly to the clergyman, and speaking in low, thick, and terrified accents—"Great Heaven! what am I, poor creature, to think or say? Let go my hand!"

"I will not, till you say you fling me off! Look in my face, Penny, and then call me your father's murderer if you can. I will not be told hereafter that you cursed my memory and reviled my name. I will hear you do so now before you stir. Am I your father's murderer?"

"Oh, Dorgan!" the girl exclaimed in a tone of cruel and piercing anguish, "what a question you ask! You! *you* his murderer! Was the hand that pressed mine so tenderly to-day the same that sent the cold steel into his brain? Were those arms that supported me so often like a mother's, the same that flung me last night against the hard floor? It is impossible! I was praying, night and morning, for many years, for your safe return, and would the Almighty, the kind and merciful Father of all, send you home at last only to wet our floor with my old father's blood? His ways are awful and inscrutable, but it is not often that He tries His children so deeply. And still, Dorgan, there is the medal that the murderer

wore, and you say 'tis your's, and you can do no more than say you are innocent. And sure it is enough from you. Don't blame me, Dorgan, if I wrong you. I love you, but I would be viler than the dust under your feet, if I did not wish to see justice done to my dead father. What am I to think or to do? My soul within me, that loves you, says that you are innocent; and my senses tell me you are guilty; and the end will be, I think, that between both tales my heart will be broken at last."

She fell back, with a burst of wild grief, as she spoke these words, into the arms of a female friend, who, at the desire of the coroner, hurried her, in a state of insensibility, through the crowd, and into the next apartment.

Dorgan continued to gaze after her with an expression of mingled admiration, pity, and agony blended in his look, until her form was completely concealed from him by the closing of the press after her.

"If you have any explanation to offer respecting those circumstances which seem to implicate you so strongly, young man," said the coroner, "we are willing to hear you now."

Dorgan started at the summons, as if all the indignant energy which he was capable of assuming had been silently gathering within his breast during the last hour, and were now for the first time suddenly enkindled at a moment. "Have I *any* thing to say?" he exclaimed; "if your souls were not blinded,

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would not the case itself make it unnecessary for me to degrade myself even to a denial of such a charge. I ask you, gentlemen," he continued, standing erect and flinging his arms wide as he looked round upon the company with that glowing eloquence of eye and cheek, and action, which the great instructress Nature can in an instant infuse on an occasion of great excitement and emergency into the constitutions of those to whom the science itself has ever remained a mystery; "I ask you, is it likely that on the first night of my arrival in my native land, after a long and profitable absence, with every thing that was wanted to secure me happiness and honour for the remainder of my life, and with the love of such a creature as that to reward me for all my sufferings and slights, and with the knowledge too that her father repented of his hard conduct towards me, and longed to call me his friend again—I ask you, is it likely that I would so causelessly dip my hands in the blood of that old man, to blast all my own hopes and prospects for ever? Is it possible? I am an Irish sailor—is that the character of ruffian or a traitor? That medal which you hold was given to me as a reward for discharging my duty well and faithfully—is it likely I would stain it with the blood of a secret murder? I trod the decks of the Victory for seven years, a deck that was never pressed by the foot of a coward. I laid my hand on the white hairs of

my commander Nelson, when he lay bleeding on the bed of glory—is it likely I should hack and hew the hoary head of a defenceless fellow-creature? I stood by his side at Trafalgar, and never shrunk in the daylight from an enemy's broadside—is it likely that I would stab an old man in the dark?"

The indignant fire and conscious energy of manner with which Dorgan spoke his defence, produced for some moments a pause of respectful silence, if not of admiration; and he was suffered for some time to retain undisputed possession of the superiority to which he had thus swiftly lifted himself above the minds of his common auditors.

"If words could outweigh facts," the coroner at length said, "it would, I believe, become our duty to liberate you at once, but these yet remain unchanged by any thing you have advanced."

"What can you do but reason on them?" said Dorgan. "If you cannot understand the arguments of honour, listen to those of prudence. Do you think it probable that the murderer of M'Loughlen would come as I have done to brave investigation so openly? Do you think he would have avowed that medal, which he might have disowned, at least until he could have placed his life beyond the power of the laws?"

"I know not," said the coroner, "by what illusions he might be cheated, or how far he

might be tempted to trust his own ingenuity. It might be that the Almighty often, for justice' sake, bereaves the minds of guilty men of that common sagacity with which He has gifted most of His creatures for their preservation, and betrayed them into measures of foolhardy confidence, in which a child might better them. Such instances are of frequent occurrence, and if yours be one of them, all which you have been urging tends only to shew that you have dreadfully misappropriated qualities which, properly directed, would have served your country and your fellow-creatures."

"They were never spared in the service of either," said Dorgan; "and little did I think that this should be my reward."

He was then removed, while the coroner and the jury performed their several offices—the former of stating the case, and the latter of considering it. In less than a quarter of an hour after, Dorgan was again called.

"It will be necessary for you," said the coroner, "to use every exertion in your power to prove your innocence, if you still persist in asserting it, and to collect all the evidence that is possible, for you are implicated in the verdict of the jury. It is, wilful murder against Duke Dorgan, and some persons unknown."

A deep silence ensued, during which all eyes were bent on the unfortunate sailor. At the first announcement of the verdict he turned

deadly pale, his eye became watery, the lid trembled, and a momentary shivering seemed to pass through all his frame. But the instant after, he had resumed his self-command, and drawing himself up to his full height, replied calmly:—

“I have been considering this occurrence more deeply since I withdrew, and am sorry now for the language which I was tempted, in the first anger of my heart, to use; not that it offended the truth, but that it argued a very stubborn will towards the ordinance of heaven. I should have recollected that you are not to blame for error in this. If it were not His will, and did not further some wise and useful, though hidden design of His, you could not lay a violent finger upon a hair of my head. My innocence is not the less white in His eyes for being wrongfully attainted in those of men. I have a strong confidence in His mercy, that the real murderer will yet be discovered, and that I shall never die for this deed: but if that confidence should fail me, I have at least the satisfaction of knowing that we shall all, in the end, be judged together before a bar where no injustice can be committed. Under all the circumstances, gentlemen, I blame you not for the verdict you have given. I acknowledge the strength of appearances, and it is therefore not in the censure of you I say—May all who hear me, obtain a fairer hearing at that bar than I have met with at yours!”

The house was soon after cleared of all but the unhappy family of the deceased and their friends. Many of the spectators, as they took their way over the fields, were heard to express their regret at such a misfortune happening to "such a bright boy" as our hero, while others shook their heads and declared (on the authority, in many instances, of severe personal experience) that "Duke had ever an always too good a warrant for a hard blow," and that the destiny which seemed now to hang over his head, was no other than had been often prophesied for him "many a long year before."

Poor Duke in the meantime was conducted, heavily ironed, to the neighbouring bridewell, as a place of temporary confinement, until an opportunity should arrive of transmitting him to the county gaol. Here, when the key (the rusty grating of which in the lock spoke pretty well for the morality of the district) had locked him in to the company of his own lonely thoughts, he could not help exclaiming, as he extended his manacled hands, in the language which Southerne has put into the mouth of the unhappy Biron, and which we have prefixed as an appropriate motto to this history, "Is this my welcome home?"

The friends of the deceased, in the meantime, were busied in administering the consolations which their humble, though sincere understandings suggested, to his wretched daughter. She was seated on the side of the

dimity-curtained camp bed in her own apartment, while the clergyman, whose influence alone appeared capable of restraining her, still occupied a chair at her side; and several of her male and female friends were placed in different parts of the room, offering now and then those venerable and hereditary expressions of consolation which are usually put forward on such occasions, and which at least have one merit, that of their perfect and unquestionable veracity—such as, “that Penny might as well hould her whisht, for if she was to cry her eyes out, ’twouldn’t make him alive again,” and various other facts of that nature; while the clergyman, with a truer insight into human nature, directed her attention to that beautiful passage of Ecclesiasticus, in which we are told to “weep but a little for the dead, for he is at rest!”

“It is not all for the dead, father—heave, forgive me!—that I grieve,” said the poor girl. “The Almighty made a short work with my father—but His mercy is swifter than the murderer’s knife—and I trust in that, hoping that he is one of those who are at rest. But I have still a trouble in my heart for the living. I wish, if it was heaven’s will, that I were waked beside my father, before I had lived to hear any one doubt Dorgan for so revengeful a heart. You, you, Kinchela!” she continued, as Pryce entered the room with a face of deep sorrow and commiseration—“you were not so

hard! On my knees, here, I ask your pardon (don't hinder me, father!) for all that I ever said or did against you for your over-great mildness. You pardoned the old man, and made him no answer to his anger. *You* would not shed his blood in return for a hot word. The Lord, that sees into the secrets of all men, will remember it for you another day!"

"Stand up!" Kinchela exclaimed, turning pale with agitation, while he lifted her hastily from the earth, and then hurried from her side. "Why should you be kneelen to me, Pennie, darlen; I don't deserve them words."

"You wrong yourself," said the clergyman, who remembered Kinchela's remonstrance to Dorgan, which he had accidentally overheard on the previous evening; "I heard you utter sentiments yesterday, which would have done honour to many a cultivated mind. It would be well for the young man that is now lying in chains for this murder if he had profited by your example and advice. But," he continued, heedless of the real distress which his praise (the result of a very natural feeling of admiration) appeared to occasion to the object of it. "Let not this move you to pride, for from it all perdition had its beginning. If you stand now, take heed lest you fall. You, perhaps, were among those who witnessed Dorgan's confidence, before the fatal train of circumstances was made out against him. Let that example place you on your guard; remember,

when you may be tempted to an offence, that there is no hiding-place on the earth for the guilty, when the Almighty chooses to mark them out with his finger; and that, as sure as the rising of the sun that hides him at night in the west, so sure is the uncloaking of the deeds of the evil-worker, though he encloses himself within four walls, and asks, 'what eye can see him?' while he sins under the veil of a denser than Egyptian darkness."

The words of the clergyman appeared to exercise a strong influence on the mind of the person whom he addressed; so much so, that his colour went and came several times while he listened. When the reverend gentleman had concluded, Kinchela took a hasty farewell of the company, on the plea of being obliged to prepare for a seal-hunt in the caverns near the Head, on the following morning. He left the inmates of the dwelling to make the necessary arrangements for the wake of the old man, while he hastened, under the already advancing shades of night, to his own humble dwelling near the coast.

He hurried over the interjacent hills with a speed which was in part occasioned by his anxiety to reach the coast in time to make the necessary arrangements for the seal-hunt; and, in a great measure also, by his fear of encountering a straggler from a host of evil spirits, whose hour of dominion on the earth was fast approaching. He raised with an

unsteady hand the latch of the *hurdle* door of his cabin, and was received by the only member of his family whom he had ever known, and whom he really loved with an affection greater and more permanent than any which he had ever felt towards a human being—his aged and infirm mother.

There are, perhaps, none of the social connexions of human life more touching, more interesting, and more perfectly free from the alloy of selfish motive, than those which bind the hearts of mother and son, or of father and daughter. The purer qualities that mingle in all other affections—the respect of youth for age, and the tenderness of age for youth—the protecting and depending love that binds the sexes—the warmth and softness of conjugal affection, without any of its changes or suspicions—the finer essences, in short, of all the various impulses by which the spirit of human beings are led to mingle and flow together in a league of mutual confidence and support, are here sublimed and united in their fullest strength and purity. Neither are such instances of generous love less interesting, when they are found to exist in classes where there is little of external refinement to grace and adorn them. The gold of nature is of the same sterling quality in its bed of rough ore, as when it glitters on the breast of beauty or of royalty; it is only the figure that is altered. If the framework of human character were not

composed of the same materials through all classes, what hope could we have that the rich, the elegant, and the high-born, would honour with their sympathy the pictures of humble sorrow and affection, which these tales are intended to present? less, even less, than we venture to entertain while we are employed in sketching them.

The affection of Kinchela for his aged mother was one of the features in his character, which had produced him a considerable portion of regard in the neighbourhood; such filial affection being looked on with a peculiar esteem in Ireland, a country where (to use a familiar expression of its own peasantry) "a man's child is always his child," for the interests of a family are seldom divided, even by marriage. The old widow was pious and honest, and though Pryce did not possess either of those qualities in any brilliant degree himself, he respected them in his parent, and was careful to preserve from her knowledge any part of his conduct by which they might be offended. Without feeling in his own heart any extraordinary respect for the precepts of his Church, he was frequently known to smuggle a keg of tobacco or Hollands, in order to enable his mother to pay her Christmas or Easter dues; and would have stolen a sheep for the suet, rather than she should suffer any conscientious qualms about the want of the usual present of candles for the altar, never

daring to supply her with either until he taxed his ingenuity to furnish a perfectly satisfactory story, which would set all her doubts or scruples at rest.

The good woman was now seated by their fire of turf and pieces of wreck, engaged in keeping warm the simple fare which was intended for her son's dinner. A small deal table was placed near the hearth, and close to it a rush-bottomed chair ready for his use. Over a few red coals, which were broken small, the iron tongs, placed lengthwise, and opened a little, was made to perform the part of a gridiron towards a Beltard turbot which a gourmand would have judged worthy of a prouder table, and a more elaborate process of cookery.

"A hundred thousand welcomes, child of my heart," said the old woman, speaking in her native language; "I thought the very darkness would not bring you home to me. Sit down."

Kinchela took his seat at the table in silence, while his mother placed before him the food which she had prepared. She perceived, however, that he did not eat with his usual dispatch and satisfaction.

"There is some secret hanging on your mind, my fair heart," said she; "you do not eat. You did not sleep at home these two nights, and when you came in this morning, you looked paler than paper, and trembled like a straw upon the water."

"I didn't sleep abroad either," replied Kinchela; "an' sure what else would I be only pale after that, an' i being gotten the canoes ready all night, let alone what I heerd this mornen, moreover."

"What was that, darling?"

"Old M'Loughlen to be murthered last night in his own house, over."

The old woman uttered an exclamation of horror—"Woe and sorrow!" she exclaimed. "When will they be weary of drawing the blood of the grey-headed? Your own father, Pryce, died by the cold steel. It is true for the priest what he said from the altar last Sunday, that Ireland was more cursed by the passions of her own children, than ever she was by Dane or Sassenagh. The judgment of the Jews will fall on us at last. We are hunted through our country, and from our country, in punishment of our sins."

"They say Dorgan—Duke Dorgan, that lived near the sally-coop, eastwards, did the deed. I saw 'em taken him off to Bridewell, on the head of it."

"There! there, Pryce!" said his mother. "Remember my words when you were refused by him, and when you swore to me that you would never forgive him the longest day that you'd live."

"I did not swear it," said Kinchela, starting, as if in alarm.

"You did, and sorry enough you were for

it afterward. You might have been in Dorgan's place, if it were not for the mercy of Heaven."

"Let us have no more talk about it now, whatever," said Pryce: "I'll want to take a little rest before goen to the seal-hunt; an' I must have the canoe near the caverns before day-break. Do you get the wattles an' the charcoal ready, mother, an' lay 'em there, a-nigh the settle-bed, agin I get up."

Pryce retired to his bed-room, but seemed to be haunted even in the darkness and solitude of this retreat by a certain uneasy train of feeling which appeared to have been clinging to him throughout the day. He had truly stated to his mother that he passed the former night without sleep; but this circumstance, instead of making him sink the more easily into slumber, had only the effect of weakening his nerves, and filling his brain with all the frantic images of sleep, without any of its calmness or comfort. His mother, disturbed by the restless moans which proceeded from his chamber, laid down the bag of charcoal which she was preparing, and taking a rush-light, made fast in the fissure of a twig, in her hand, entered the room. Her son was at that moment labouring under a hideous dream. His head hung down over the bedside, his arms were extended, his forehead and hair damp with sweat. He saw, in fancy, the corpse of the old man as it lay stretched on

the table at M'Loughlen's, and seemed to be oppressed with the conviction that some person had seized and was taxing him with the deed.

"Let go my throat," he muttered hoarsely. "It was not I—'Twas Dorgan—Dorgan did it, and not I! He lies—the old man never named me—he could not—for my face was blackened. Let go my throat!"

"The Almighty protect and bless my son," said the woman, as she stirred him, and made him spring up terrified in his bed; "what words are these?"

Kinchela remained for some time sitting erect, his eyes wild and staring, and his mouth agape with terror. Consciousness at length stole upon him, and covering his face with his hands, he leaned forward for some moments in silence.

"What was the matter, child?" the old woman at length asked, as she laid her hand affectionately on his shoulder.

"Nothen!—nothen—only dreamen greatly I was—aren't you gone to bed yet, mother?"

"No, darling; 'tisn't far in the night. Those were dreadful words you spoke, Pryce."

"Did I talk out o' my sleep?"

"You did; you spoke as if somebody was charging you with a great crime, and you denied it, and bid them to let go your throat."

Pryce paused a moment. "Well, mother," said he at length, "I didn't think it would be so

aisy to take a start out o' you. Sure 'twas funnen I was all that while."

"There was little mirth then in your voice or in your actions," replied his mother, still speaking (as she always used) in her vernacular tongue; "I thought the hag of the night had been throttling you."

"I tell you 'twas a joke, agin. Sure I *felt* you comen into the room. I was as broad awake as you are now. Go to bed, mother, an' hear to me! Don't say anythen o' this in the mornen, for 'twouldn't look well to be joken on such a business."

The aged woman left the room and retired to her own settle bed, after offering up her usual portion of nightly invocations to the throne of mercy for all blessings upon all men; while her son remained wrapt in a mood of intense reflection, sitting on his bed-side, and using every exertion in his power to compose his troubled spirit.

"For years an' years," said he, "I was looken to that hour, an' I thought it would be worth all I ever suffered or ever could suffer to live to see it; an' now it has come, an' is this the happiness it was to bring me? The pains of hunger and thirst, the cold of the winter night, the shame and disgrace that I endured, were no more than child's play to the sight of him as he lay gaspen and groanen on the ground before me. Murder is a fearful thing for all!"

Suddenly, while he paused and remained

fixed in horror at the bed-side, a sensation of strong fear, one of those powerful nervous affections by which persons of deep though silent passions and ill-regulated minds are liable to be assailed on any startling occasion, rushed to his heart and caused the blood to recoil upon it in such quantity, as to obstruct its action, and endanger, to his own thought, the very structure of the organ. Its pulses ceased for a moment, and then resumed their play, with a violence which filled him with terror. He heard distinctly every bound which the irritated muscle made within his bosom, and a swift and unaccountable suspicion darted through his mind that this was but the signal of a dissolution of the entire frame; that the hour of death, which no accident of illness or of peril had ever brought before him, was now arrived, and that he was presently to undergo that awful and mysterious change at the prospect of which even the impenetrable heart becomes illumined by a horrid light, and the souls of the saints themselves are not always free from anxiety; that change at the presence of which the light laugh or jest of petty malice, which was deemed so venial in the course of the preceding day, seems to swell and darken into a crime sufficiently enormous to blot out the light of paradise from our eyes for ever. The wretched man believed that he was about to be hurried, fresh from the very act of his offending, before the judgment-seat,

the terrors of which he had often heard depicted, but which had never affected his mind with any other sensation than that of weariness and impatience, until now that he almost beheld it within the scope of his own vision. *He lay back in an agony of horror* on his bed—the world and his worldly interests and connexions seemed to crumble into dust before his eyes—he was sensible of nothing but the eternal ruin that hung over him. He clasped his hands, while a thick perspiration spread over all his frame, and prayed loudly for mercy, promising in his anguish that if he were granted but a little time, all should be disclosed, and justice fulfilled at any cost. While he continued praying, the beating of his heart subsided, a gradual relief crept over his spirits, which were at length lulled fast in a sound and dreamless slumber.

The first grey light of the winter day break was streaming through the single pane of glass which was set in the mud wall of his apartment, when the voice of an acquaintance roused him from his short sleep. For a few moments after he woke he felt as if nothing had taken place out of the usual course of events, and proceeded to make the necessary preparations for the sea-hunt.

“We’ve everything ready,” said the man; “the canoes are at the Poul-a-Dhiol, an’ we’re goen to have some fun with Lewy Madigan, the publican o’ the Bee-hive, that’s comen wit

uz—an'—whisht! Is there any body there wit you?"

"No."

"Bekays I met Dorgan now an' a strong party, goen to Ennis, where the assizes are held this week. They say he won't call any witness, an' wants to be tried as soon as they can."

Pryce dropped the net, which he had taken up, and remained silent for a moment. The consciousness of his situation came rushing at once upon his mind, and he remembered with terror the vow of disclosure which he had made in the night. He now stood, however, in very different circumstances; the cheerful daylight was about him, he felt secure in the possession of excellent health, and he half resolved in his own mind to postpone the fulfilment of his promise for some time yet.

Before he left the house, he took a small iron pot filled with potatoes, washed and ready for boiling, which he proceeded to hang on the fire. 'Yes—that's what I'll do," he said within himself—"what fear is there o' me now? Sure it's time enough to think about it yet."

A singular accident made him alter this opinion. At the moment that he spoke, a large stone, unfixed by the hand of Time from its position in the roof of the wide chimney, fell within an inch of his forehead, and dashed the vessel to pieces between his hands. If it had only held its place one second longer, his brains

would have infallibly suffered the same fate. He started aghast with the conviction of a present and powerful Providence. What security had he now? what was the use of the ingenious scheme which he had contrived to preserve his life and escape all suspicion, when it was no more within his own power than if he were already at the tree?

As they proceeded together toward that part of the cliff at which their canoes (a light boat, as ancient as the days of Ollahm Fodlah, constructed of horse skin, which is used by the fisherman on those coasts) were moored, Kinchela ventured to hint a sensation of his remorse to the rough fellow who accompanied him. The latter happened to be one of those cold ruffians, whose crimes are the offspring of interest and not of passion, and who was alike incapable of wanton cruelty or of merciful forbearance. The suggestion filled him with rage.

"That I may be happy, Kinchela," said he; "but you're just what I always took you for. You wor the cruellest savage among us at the time, an' now I'll lay my life you'll be the fusht to split."

"Well, howl your tongue, Fed, an' we'll say nothen more about it. Only I wisht I could avoid the double murder, any way."

"What murder is it, man? E' what nonsense you talk! Sure you know yourself, if Dorgan was there he'd do the very

same, an' 'twas only to get the start of him you did.

Kinchela did not pursue the subject farther, although the reasoning of his companion did not fully satisfy his mind that Dorgan deserved hanging for being liable to temptation. They had at this moment reached the brink of a long line of rocky cliffs, of considerable height, the bases of which were in many places hollowed out to a considerable distance inland. They continued their course over a turf mountain, on which the signal tower was placed in a most commanding situation. Its surface was covered with a short scanty moss, that afforded pasturage to a number of sheep; while, at another season, it might have furnished the whole country with mushrooms. The broken jags and edges of the great cliffs at the Head soon began to make themselves visible. The first on which they arrived presented a broken descent some hundred feet high, at the base of which lay a sloping ledge of rock, against whose jutting and uneven sides the bright green waves of the Atlantic lashed themselves (on more boisterous mornings than the present), as if chafing at the stern and fixed rebuke which the's gigantic natural boundary opposes to their fury; sometimes rushing fiercely up its sides, and leaving their white and foaming waters in the narrow crevices of crag, from which they are seen descending again as a thousand silky streams. They tried

to descend here, but found it dangerous; that part of the recess which, seen from a little distance, appeared to be sufficiently broken and slanting, proving, when they came near it, much more closely allied to the perpendicular. A little farther toward the Head, however, they chanced upon the Poul-a-Dhiol, or Devil's Hole.

It was a recess of gigantic size, formed in the solid cliff by the beating of the waves, if not originally so moulded, or left as a relic of chaotic matter, unsubdued to the form and uses to which the great mass of the material, of which this beautiful globe of earth and water is compounded, has been reduced. This recess ran at first into the land, and then some hundred yards to the left, as it was viewed from the water.

Perceiving an easy mode of descent, Kinchela and his friends made good their entry into the infernal palace, and were stopped about half way down by an enormous rock, which lay across the glen, and seemed to allow no hope of proceeding farther. Acquainted, however, with the facilities of the descent, they entered a small aperture left underneath. The spectacle which the Poul-a-Dhiol presented, when viewed from beneath this arch-way, was grand and striking, as well as singular in the highest degree. Through the opening, as they looked upward, they could see the cliff head piled together to the height of some hundred feet, leaving between the uneven masses of

rock the wild and craggy space through which they had descended. Below them, at a depth of many fathoms, the ocean waves heaved sluggishly against the huge rocks, which were almost polished and rounded by the untiring dash of the waters. Passing from beneath the rock, the fishermen suffered themselves to drop with little difficulty to the next ledge; and running from one enormous crag to another down to the water's edge, began to make the necessary preparations for their morning's sport, without stopping to indulge in any of the sensations of deep and trembling awe with which the magnificence and grandeur of the scene, into the centre of which they had intruded, must have impressed the mind of a stranger. They stood in the midst of a vast natural hall, a few yards in width, and walled in on either side to the height of many hundred feet; the solid cliff on the landward side appearing directly to overhang their heads. Opposite, in a dark recess of the cliff, and placed on a ledge of a rock at some height from the water, was a large crag, approaching in form to a lobster's claw, based on the obtuse end, which, from the singularity of its appearance, contributed much to the *bizarre* and fantastic grandeur of the scene. Looking toward the opening of the recess, they beheld the projections of three stupendous and overhanging cliffs, within the compass of quarter of a mile; the furthest off

being the land's end or actual Head on which the light-house was still flinging its fading beams against the morning splendour. Close to the opening was a lofty island, perpendicular at all sides, and circular in shape, of dimensions so circumscribed, that it seemed to rise from the waters at the entrance like the remaining column of a porch. Its healthy and tabular summit was covered with sea-gulls, which kept wheeling and screaming perpetually among the crags and precipices. Close to the head was a large insular crag, which rose even higher than the lofty cliff from which it seemed at one time or another to have been separated, and formed a noble termination to this magnificent coup-d'œil. The prevailing impression which the scene, contemplated from the place where the fishermen stood, was calculated to leave on an unaccustomed mind, was that of fear, and an anxious and almost tumultuous excitation of the spirits. There was an oppressive sense of confinement and insecurity, which repressed the struggling admiration that a spectacle of even inferior power or sublimity might have awakened.

Several canoes were already made fast near the rocks, and a number of fishermen were seen in various clefts of the sullen crag, preparing their poles or wattles with bags of charcoal affixed to them, touching the use of which they furnish a rather whimsical account of the animal's nature. They say that the seal is

very 'certain to lay hold of the person who first approaches him, and to retain his hold until he hears the bone crack under his teeth. In order to deceive him in this matter, the fishermen extend a long pole with a bag of charcoal attached, which bag he crunches with a remarkably good will, while his enemies muster around and destroy him with staves. For the truth of this story we will not vouch, as it certainly is not very complimentary to the sagacity of the animal.

The groups of moving figures in the crags—the tossing of the light canoes beneath—the dreary waste of the now peaceful ocean spreading in the distance—and the uncertain morning light which at once shadowed and illumined the whole picture in the manner best adapted to aid the grandeur of the effect which it was calculated to produce, might possibly have arrested for a considerable time the attention of persons more capable of appreciating its sublimity than Kinchela and his friend, who were too familiar with its beauties, and too deficient in refinement of taste to pause for a moment in their contemplation.

After they had descended, they were met by a man, who appeared to have been expecting their arrival.

“I declare, gentlemen,” said he, accosting them in the manner of a condescending superior—“I have been prefixed upon this rock the livelong morn, expecting your descension.

That's a commendable canoe you have, Fed."

"Oyeh wisha, middlen."

"Dear knows, it is. They say the seals are congregated in a very spontaneous manner under the cliffs, at Ballybunnion this morning."

"O, enough for sport, I'll be bound, Mr Madigan," said Fed, who recognised at first sight, in the speaker, the accomplished inn-keeper of the Bee-hive, a man revered in the neighbourhood for his knowledge of English, and laughed at now and then for his cowardice.

"You'll go with us, I suppose, sir?"

"I profess to you, my dear, I am onaisy in myself on the prospect of it. I should not like much to be substituted onder one o' them caverns, when the tide would be on the alert with me."

"O, no fear in life, sir. The water is like glass to-day. Come along, Kinchela; we'll just take one turn at the seals, an' then we'll go westwards a piece, and get a few bags o' the barnocks."

They put off, and the whole party were presently gliding under the cliffs at the Head, on their way to the caverns, each canoe being furnished with a lighted torch, to enable them, with greater facility, to explore the mazes of the gloomy subterrene into which they were about to penetrate. As the first boats entered, it seemed to those who were following at some distance, and not yet near enough to distinguish

the mouth of the cavern, as if their companions had discovered, and were prosecuting the way to the regions of those subaqueous sprites, who are supposed by the peasantry to people the vast palaces of the deep, and wear out their immortality in a fairy and more gorgeous than that to which the muse of Southey introduced the protector of his heroine. In a short time our acquaintances found themselves in the centre of one of those lofty natural halls; the roof, irregularly arched above, sometimes at the height of three, sometimes twenty feet, and glittering indistinctly in the light of the numerous torches which were also reflected from the face of the broken waters, with a splendour which presented a brilliant contrast to the dense gloom of the interior of the cavern, and which, of course, would have reminded the reader of Rembrandt.

"It is a speculation of uncommon perplexity," said Mr Madigan, "those exuberant rocks overhead; I protest to you, I think they appear on the verge of suspense, as if they'd exterminate us all in a watery grave."

The canoes proceeded farther up the cave, until the dashing of waters, within a few yards of them, intimated their proximity to the ledges of the rock on which the objects of their search were accustomed to secrete themselves at particular seasons, and when they frequently suffer their pursuers to approach them, without making any attempt at escape or resistance

until violence had been actually offered. While they pursued their game in the interior, Madigan petitioned to be left on one of the outer ledges, unwilling to trust his English into the pearls of the hunt; while Kinchela and his companion, perceiving that they might be spared from the party, left the cavern for the purpose of gathering barnocks (a shell fish which is here found of a prodigious size), from the sides of a neighbouring cliff.

The cliff which they selected for this purpose was the Bellaun Rock; which presents, from the plainness and smoothness of its perpendicular side, a striking contrast to the rough and broken barrier, which opposes its irregular strength to the ocean on either side. It is one of the loftiest of the range, and as it affords no path or means of descent in any part, the fishermen are obliged to lower themselves by ropes to its centre, or to any portion of it, on which the harvest of barnocks happens to be most plentiful. Kinchela and his friends made profit of the retiring tide, however, from their canoes, and then proceeded by land to Claunsevana, or the Natural Bridge, a piece of scenery with which we will conclude our rather copious sketch of the coast, and the omission of which would leave that sketch very incomplete.

They passed along a precipitous range of cliffs, until they were made aware of the proximity of the place by the thundering of

the waters on their left, although the day was calm rather than otherwise. They passed the Puffing Hole of Ross (one of those natural *jets d'eau*, which abound on the coast, and which are formed by a narrow opening, inland, over one of the caverns, into which the ocean waves rush with such fury as to force their way through the neck, and ascend to a prodigious height in the air above), and in a short time they found themselves on the borders of the precipitous inlet of Claunsevana. It was a small bay with a narrow opening toward the Atlantic, and walled round at all sides by a rugged crag which rose to a prodigious height. Across an arm of this inlet was a narrow range of crag, connecting the cliffs at either side, having the bay on one side, and on the other a deep basin, into which the waters flowed through three natural arches formed in the solid crag. A very narrow pathway was made on the summit of this singular natural bridge, several hundred feet above the arches, the fall at either side, but especially that toward the ocean, being almost perpendicular. In the base of the cliff inside the basin were a number of small caves; and in another corner of the inlet a tall column of rock, not more than a yard, perhaps, in diameter, rose from the waves nearly to the height of the cliff, at a little distance from which it stood. This pillar, which is called the Stick, gives an air of uncommon wildness to the scene.

Kinchela having, with the assistance of his friend, succeeded in securing, near the edge of the cliff, a kind of rude windlass, for the purpose of enabling them to increase their store of barnocks, made fast their rope in the earth, and prepared to descend.

This was a feat which he had been accustomed to perform, almost daily, from his boyhood, and he never had, for one moment, felt a greater repugnance or apprehension than he would have experienced in walking on the firm soil. But he was now an altered man, and he felt, as he put his foot in the loop which was made in the end of the rope, and grasping it with both hands, launched himself from the brow of the "pernicious height," a sensation of insecurity, and a sinking of the heart, such as he never before had felt in any situation whatever. He even wished that he had taken the precaution (though it would have had but a cowardly air), to secure himself to the rope by tying it to his waist, but it was now too late for reflection, and he had only to trust his customary chances for a safe return to the firm earth.

While he was occupied in filling his net with the barnocks which he struck from the rock, he suddenly heard a crackling noise above his head, and looking up, saw one of the divisions or strands of the rope had given way, leaving the whole weight of his person on the faith of a single cord, not more than half an inch in

diameter. He was now suspended in mid-air, more than a hundred feet from the summit, and saw, at a fearful distance beneath, the points of the rugged crag, around which the waters were now slumbering in almost a moveless calm. He feared to stir—to speak—to give any indication of his danger, lest it should only have the effect of making the latter more imminent. His limbs trembled, and became bathed in perspiration, while he cast his eyes on that part of the rope where the fissure had taken place. He could almost, and only almost, reach it with his hand. Again all the horrors of the preceding night and morning were renewed, and a stupifying terror seized upon his brain. He ventured, at length, to give the signal, at which his companion was to draw him to the summit. While he was doing so, and while he yet hung suspended between the dreadful alternative of life or death, some of the canoes passed under him on their way from the caverns to their homes, and the fishermen, in their own aboriginal language, began to hoot and jibe him as they passed, making various allusions to his position in the air, and drawing analogies concerning the rope, the humour of which poor Kinchela was in no condition to appreciate. A cold shivering passed through his limbs, when he saw the feeble portion of it approach the rugged edge of the cliff—and here, as if for the purpose of increasing

his agony, Fed stopped turning the windlass, and approached the brink with marks of alarm and astonishment.

"E', Pryce, man," said he, "do you see the danger you're in all this while? Sure there's the rope med a'most to halves of, above you. Sure, if that broke you'd be ruined, man."

"Wisha, then, Fed, what news you tell!—is that the reason you stop haulen of it, in dread I'd have any chance at all? Murther alive, see this."

"I'll pull you up if you like, man, but what harm was there in me tellen you your danger?"

"All o' one 'tisen't, too well I knew it. Pull away, an' *sonuher* to you."

Fed resumed his post at the windlass, and in a few moments after, Kinchela grasped the edge of the cliff; he succeeded in scrambling up, after which, without speaking a word to his companion, he flung down the net of barnocks, and fled, as if he were hunted by the fiends, in the direction of his mother's house, while his companion, after gazing after him and at the barnocks for a few moments, packed up their implements, and took to his heels, under the full conviction that the *phuca* was coming up the cliff to them.

"The Almighty is impatient, I believe," said Pryce, when he had reached his own door, "he will wait no longer. There is no use in my hoping to escape—I must do it at last—an' I oughtn't to be dragged and frightened

into it this way, so that there'll be no thanks to me in the end."

Notwithstanding this wholesome reflection, the weakness of the man's nature was such, that many days elapsed before he could prevail on himself to put in act any portion of the measures necessary for the accomplishment of his resolution. Even, after he had learned from a neighbour that Dorgan's sentence had already passed, and that the day was appointed on which he was to be executed, in the neighbourhood where the offence had taken place, he sustained many terrific struggles with his conscience before he could bring himself to form a full and unreserved intention of making the disclosure, whatever it might be, which oppressed his soul. He felt its fears, at one time, muster on him in such excess, as to overpower, for the moment, every other consideration besides that of his immediate personal safety; and at another, the recollection of the perils he had undergone, and the uncertain tenure of his own life, which they manifested to him, renewed his remorse and terror of another more powerful tribunal than that which here awaited him. He recollected, too, amid his merely selfish reflections, the destitution which must attend the lonely old age of his unhappy parent, when he should be no longer able to minister to her wants, as he had done from his youth upwards; but again he recollected that a superior duty called him:

away, and he resolved to commit her fortunes to the care of the Being who summoned him from her side by warnings so singular and impressive—warnings, however fearful they might seem, which it would not, perhaps, require much enthusiasm to attribute to the mercy shown on behalf of this single virtue, which looked so lonely and beautiful amid the darkness and the multiplicity of his crimes.

Dorgan in the meantime was left to meditate, in the solitude of a condemned cell, on the singular fatality of the circumstances which had conducted him to it. The ceremony of a trial has been so often and so well delineated, and the facts that were proved on that of Dorgan were so merely a repetition of those which have already been laid before the reader in the account of the coroner's inquest, that we have esteemed it unnecessary to go at length into the subject. Whatever amusement the reader might find in the blunders of Irish witnesses, or the solicisms of an Irish court of justice, they afforded but little subject of merriment to our poor hero, who, in spite of the confident anticipations which he had expressed to the coroner, beheld himself placed within the peril of a disgraceful death, at the very moment when he expected to enter on the enjoyment of a life of domestic comfort and quiet happiness—happiness which was so justly earned by a youth of exertion and providence. Neither had he the comfort of

leaving on earth a single heart that was impressed with the conviction of his innocence. Unjustly as he had been treated by the world, his was not one of those natures which could take refuge in misanthropy from the agony of disappointed feelings; and he longed, anxiously longed, for some opportunity of clearing himself, at least in the opinion of one individual. But the instant after, he reproached himself for this wish, as selfish and unworthy. "No!" said he, "her knowledge of my innocence obtained only through my assertion would not save my life, and could only have the effect of torturing her with the consciousness of having assisted in the destroying it. Let her never know it. What good would it do me to be remembered by her as other than she now thinks me? Would it restore life to my buried bones, or enable me to enjoy what I have lost? It would not, therefore I will leave it to Providence to keep the question of my guilt or innocence revealed or hidden as he pleases; doing only that which in justice and duty I am bound to do, to remove the false impression from the minds of my fellow-countrymen."

While he revolved these things in his mind the door of the cell was opened, and the sheriff, attended by two officers and a clergyman, entered. In spite of all the efforts which he had made to establish his resolution, so as to support him through this fatal moment.

Dorgan felt a cold thrill shooting through all his limbs when it actually arrived, and it was not without considerable difficulty that he could so far command his heart as to understand what the officer was saying to him. However perfectly we may, to our own thought, bend up our minds to the endurance of any dreadful extremity, and however satisfied we may be to abandon all expectation of avoidance or escape, it is certain that, until the very instant of its accomplishment has arrived, an unacknowledged, unconscious hope will yet continue lingering about the heart, the discomfiture of which (as it gives place at length to black and absolute despair) is more terrific than the very separation of our two-fold existence itself. Our unfortunate hero leaned heavily on the clergyman while the death-warrant was read over. The hand-cuffs were then struck off, as if for the purpose of mocking him with a freedom which he never could enjoy; and a man, covered from head to foot in a thick blanket, at sight of whom Dorgan shuddered to the very centre of his being, approached him with a halter, on which the awful noose was already formed, in his hand. He lifted it, for the purpose, as is usual, of suffering Dorgan to carry it to the place of execution; but the latter recoiled with horror at this apparently unneedful cruelty.

"It must be done," said the sheriff, "put it over his head."

"Remember heaven," said the clergyman; "will you refuse to imitate its monarch? He bore his cross to Calvary."

Nothing affects the heart more deeply, at a moment of this kind, than a sentiment of religion. The tears suddenly rushed into Dorgan's eyes, and bowing his head in silence, he suffered the ignominious badge to be laid on his neck without farther question.

"Why is the prisoner not dressed in the gaol clothes?" said the sheriff.

"There was no order given, sir," said the gaoler, "an' I'm afeared twould be late wit uz, now."

"No matter," replied the sheriff; "it will answer as it is. Let him die in the clothes in which the deed was done."

Dorgan instantly raised his head from its drooping position, and looking calmly and fixedly on the officer of the law, said: "Let me die, sir, in the clothes which I wore in the service of my country. Her uniform will never be disgraced by a death that is not merited, although it be shameful."

"You persist then in declaring your innocence?" asked the officer.

"I did not intend, sir, to have repeated what I already said; and *that* last word escaped un-
awares, but since you put the question, justice compels me to give you an answer. I here solemnly declare, in the presence of these men, my accusers and my executioners, as well

as in the presence of that God before whose throne I must shortly stand, that I am now about to die the death of a murdered man. Yes, ye are about to do a murder, and it is more for your sakes than mine, that I bid you take the warning. The day will come, sir, when you will remember my words with sorrow. I pray heaven that you may have no heavier feeling to strive against. *You, father, were one of the witnesses against me; when the day arrives, as it may before long, that shall make my innocence appear, all I ask, sir, is, that you will pause, and weigh the matter well with yourself before you throw in your hard word against a poor fellow-creature's life. Remember these words. I hope that my fate will teach the gentlemen that have the lives of the poor in their hands to proceed very cautiously in future, before they take circumstances for certainty. I am ready to attend you, Mr Sheriff."

Two cars (in English, carts) were placed outside the gaol, in one of which Dorgan and the clergyman were placed, while the other was occupied by the blanketed personage above-mentioned, who immediately secreted himself, amid the shouts and groans of the populace, under the straw which was placed in it for that purpose. As the cars were about to move forward, a woman passed through the guard, and grasped the rail of that which contained Dorgan, who was deeply absorbed at the

moment, in the discourse which the clergyman directed to him. One of the soldiers perceived, and striking her on the shoulder with the butt end of his musket, bid her go back.

"One word, sodger darlen, let me only spake a word to the boy, an' I'll be off. Mr Dorgan! Don't you hear, sir?"

Dorgan lifted up his eyes, and started back with sudden terror, as he beheld the card-drawer, his evil prophet, looking into his eyes, with her finger raised in the action of beckoning or inviting his attention. The clergyman also recognised her at the same instant.

"Wretched impostor!" he exclaimed, "how dared you force your way hither? Is it not enough that you mislead fools in their health, but you must trouble the hope of the dying, as you do now?"

"No trouble in life, your reverence, only just to spake one word to the boy. Mr Dorgan, there's one gay me a message to you, sir—to say—whisper hether——"

"Remove that woman," said the sheriff.

"I say, you mizzuz!" said a soldier, elbowing her from the car.

"Only one word, sodger, dear darlen——"

"Remove her, I say!"

"One word; O darlen sodger, don't kill me with the plundtherpush—Mr Duke, keep up your sparrits, for there's one that 'll——"

The remainder of the speech (if it were uttered) was unheard by the ears for which it

was intended, as the speaker was forced back into the centre of the noisy press, and the party proceeded on their route.

The day was as dreary as the occasion. The remark, so popular in Ireland, that there never is an assize week without rain, was in this instance justified by a thick mizzle which made the air dull and gloomy, and covered the trees and herbage with a hoar and dimly glittering moisture. There was no wind, and the distant surface of the river, as they passed in the direction of its mouth, was covered by a mantle of gray and eddying mist, through which the shadow of a dark and flagging sail, or the naked masts of an anchoring vessel, were at intervals visible. The crowd which had accompanied the party to the outskirts of the city dropped off gradually as they proceeded into the country, until they were left to prosecute their dreary journey with no other attendants than the few whose interest in the prisoner's fate had induced them to come from the coast for the purpose of witnessing his trial.

It was late in the afternoon before they arrived at Carrigaholt. As the cars were descending an eminence in the neighbourhood, Dorgan cast his eyes towards the west, and beheld, on the very spot where he had parted with his love before his departure to join his ship, and where the sweetest hours of their first and declared affection had been passed,

the dreadful engine erected, on which he was within another hour to lose a life which but a few days before he would not have given for that of a purpled monarch. A great number of people encompassed the spot, among whom might be discerned the light blue dresses of the fish-jolters from the coast; the rough and half sailor-like persons the fishermen; the great-coated and comfortably appointed farmers from the interior; nearly all of those whom he beheld having been at one time or another the partakers of some hours of youthful enjoyment with the victim of the sacrifice, in his days of careless boyhood. Seated on a green bank, at two or three hundred paces distant from the gallows, were a group of persons, comprising a soldier and two sailors, the same who were witnesses to Dorgan's first landing, during their watch at the signal tower on the evening of his arrival.

"I say, you land-lobster there," said the hero of the draught-board, "will you dounce your sky tackle there and let us have a peep at the fun. A messmate? I'd rather than a gallooner it had been a red jacket instead of a true blue. You have the wind o' me there, Bill."

"I say, Jack!" the soldier replied, turning his head round, "you mind the Papist that made the bull that night."

"Ay—ay—"

"There he's over; sneaking to that elderly

lady standing at her ease with the pipe in her mouth."

"Eh? Why, unreeve my clue lines, Will, if that an't the very lubber I met in the larboard field yonder, this morning, abaft the tower. I'll tell you now how it was—I saw his pennant flying on the lee, and took him for our cook at the tower; so I made sail—he stood off—I gave chase—he tacked and stood across the meadow—I squared my yard, out studding-sails—sung out 'steady'—poured in a broadside, and ran alongside to see my mistake just as he weathered the gap in the hedge. 'My eye,' says I, 'here's a go—I took you for our cook.'—'No, sir,' says he, 'I'm for the hanging match; can you tow me on the way?'—'To be sure I can,' says I, 'bout ship and sheer off yonder; when you come abaft the water-mill, belay sheets and tack and stand off close to the wind's eye for the potatoe field, then bear away for the bog, sing out a-head, and if they won't open the gate, 'bout ship again!—loose your main sheet—make for the white cottage—gibe, and come out upon the highway—crowd all your canvas, and run right a-head for the gallows.'"

"Haw! haw!—And what did the Hirish Roman Papist say to you?"

"He stood with his mouth open, gaping like an empty scuttle butt. The fellow never heard English in his life before. Oy say! you Papist Paddy, you, come here and make

us a bull, and you shall have a glass o' grog, when I'm purser?"

The person whom he addressed was standing at a few paces distant, occupied with far other and deeper thoughts than those which suggested the holiday converse of the last speakers. His eye was fixed on the place of execution, while he received some message from an old and miserably attired woman, which seemed to fill him with anxiety and disappointment.

He turned on the sailor a ghastly and fearful eye, but made no answer to his words.

"Never look so cloudy about it, messmate," the latter continued in an unmoved tone. "Cheer up, man, the rope is not twisted for your neck yet. Jack's alive; who's for a row? Never say die while there's a shot in the locker. Whup!"

"It would become you, av your a Christian yourself, to conduct yourself wit more feeling and more dacency, an' the breath goen to be taken out of a poor fellow-cratur," said the woman.

"He's some cousin of yours, mistress, by the kindness you show him."

"Ayeh, my dear," the card-drawer retorted, plucking the man's blue jacket significantly, "'tisn't my unyform he wears."

A shout of laughter burst from the sailor's companions at this sally, as the old woman

hastened off, audibly humming over a stanza of the popular ballad—

“An’ as for sailors I don’t admire them,
I wouldn’t live as a sailor’s bride,
For in their coorten they’re still discoursing
Of things consarnen the ocean wide.”

While the countryman, who had shown such marks of intense interest in the scene, disappeared amid the crowd that surrounded the place of execution.

The car had already halted at the foot of the fatal tree, and Dorgan, his limbs stiff from the maintenance of the same position during the long journey, was ordered to stand erect. He opened his eyes heavily, and gazed around on the multitude of faces that were turned towards him; he looked on the fields and meadows in which his childhood had been passed, and felt his heart almost break with the long farewell which it sent forth in a sigh, that

“—seemed to shatter all his bulk
And end his being—”

The awful preparations were already completed; Dorgan’s hands were pinioned, the dreadful knot affixed, and the whole scene, the hills and cottages and buzzing multitude, swam and reeled before his eyes, when the ghost-like person in the blanket approached, and uncovering from beneath his woollen envelope a bony and muscular hand, extended it to our hero, saying at the same time:

"*Therom-a-lauw a gra bauwn.* Forgive an' forget. Sorrow better boy ever I see die in his shoes. Say you won't be haanten me for this, it's only my juty."

Dorgan, half-stupified, gave his hand in token of his forgiveness, and at the same instant felt the death-cap pulled over his eyes, while the command to "draw away the car" sounded in his ears.

"Hold!" cried the clergyman to the owner of the vehicle, who with much simplicity had taken the collar and was about to lead the horse away, not considering that by so doing he would in fact be the executioner of the convict. "Let the man who is engaged for the purpose be the shedder of the forfeited blood," continued his reverence. "Do not move the horse."

"A' then your reverince might just let matters go on as they were," said the finisher of the law. "It's all one to the boy who does that job for him."

The pause saved Dorgan's life. At the moment when the hangman was about to lay his hands on the collar, the crowd near him separated with much noise and confusion, and a man darting through the passage and through the file of soldiers, seized the rude bridle, and striking the executioner so as to make him reel and stagger a few paces, cried out in a loud voice, "Come down, Mr Dorgan, come down off o' the car. Let him go, Mr

Sheriff, dear, for the man is here that did the deed."

The sheriff, in the midst of the confusion that prevailed, imagining that a rescue was about to be attempted, had cocked a pistol and placed it to the head of his prisoner. He now suffered the muzzle to fall, and gazed in astonishment on Kinchela, who stood, pale, trembling, and listless, at the horse's head. The truth flashed on the clergyman's mind, as he recognised in Pryce the same individual who sat with Dorgan in the parlour of the Bee-hive on the evening before the murder. He suggested to the sheriff the propriety of inquiry.

"It may be a cheat," said the officer, "and if so, how dreadfully cruel will be the disappointment to the prisoner after this suspense."

"Let the man be summoned hither and questioned at once," said the priest

Kinchela was called accordingly, but he was unable, for a long time, to answer, or even to comprehend the questions that were put to him. The excess of his terror had deprived him for the moment of all consciousness; he saw a thousand faces flitting about him, and heard a thousand voices at his ear, but was totally incapable of appreciating their meaning or their wishes. The sight of Dorgan, still pinioned and blind-folded in the car, at length startled him from his stupor; he suddenly

extended his arms, and repeated with great violence, "Come, sheriff, let go Mr Dorgan, for he's innocent. I am the man that done it."

"That did what?"

"That murdered old M'Loughlen!" Kinchela exclaimed, with a gesture of deep horror depicted on his countenance, "an' here I'm come to answer for it now."

"If the man should be a maniac," said the sheriff.

"Oh, I wisht to the heavens I was!" Kinchela exclaimed. "No, no; I was mad when I done it, it's in my sober senses I come to declare it. Let Mr Dorgan loose, an' tie me up in his place, an' heavens bless you, an' don't keep me long in pain, for I hear hangen is a fearful death."

After some consultation, the sheriff agreed to take upon him all the responsibility of delay; the unhappy Dorgan was unbound and removed from the car. He looked drearily around him, and leaned on the clergyman for support, while the change in his fortunes was communicated to him by the sheriff.

"In the middle o' the night, that same time," said Kinchela, in answer to the inquiries which were made respecting the manner of the occurrence, "I made my way into Dorgan's room, and took his clothes that wor lyen on the chair, and dressed myself in 'em, and in them I did the murder. I don't know what

made me tell it, but my conscience was killen o' me intirely. Mr Dorgan, I have only one word to say to you before we part. My poor old mother, that's——" the word stuck in his throat, and he could only look his meaning through his tears."

"Never fear for her," said Dorgan; "she shall be provided for. Oh, Pryce, I little thought—well, there's no use in talking about it now."

The sheriff now gave orders to take Kinchela into custody, retaining Dorgan at the same time under arrest, until his sentence should be rescinded according to the usual form. The crowd separated in great confusion.

It now became a point of consideration with her friends to devise the most easy method of breaking the joyous intelligence of her lover's innocence and liberation to Penny M'Loughlen. Although the mode of her life and education exempted her in general from the danger which might be apprehended in such cases to a person of more refined habits or a more nervous constitution; yet it was conjectured with much truth and sagacity, that the repetition of so many dreadful shocks within so short a space of time, could not fail to be injurious in its operation on a mind not altogether destitute of sensibility. If the reader have curiosity or good feeling enough to induce him to entertain an interest in the contrivances of their rustic wits on this occasion, we will

venture to prolong the narrative to its real consummation, the reconciliation of the lovers.

Penny had removed immediately after the day on which her father's funeral took place, to the house of a relative—a "*daleing* woman," in the village of Carrigaholt. A few days after Dorgan's formal pardon had been obtained, his fair accuser being yet in ignorance of all the events which succeeded the trial, she was seated in a small clean room, called a parlour, inside the shop, in which her relative appeared, bustling about in all the conscious satisfaction and importance of a thriving huxter, among her closely-packed assortment of haberdashery, reaping hooks, penknives, notation-books, *reading-made-easys*, snuff and tobacco, flax-seed, prayer-books, halters, waistcoat-patterns, plates, dishes of the most flaming colours, with a small stock of grocery, and, in short, every description of merchandise which might by any possible contingency become needful to the comfort of the good folks in the neighbourhood. The door of the little parlour was left ajar, so that our heroine, while occupied in her usual duty of instructing her infant cousin in her rudimental lessons, could hear all that passed without. A snug-looking farmer was bargaining at one side of the shop for a new "*Poor Man's Manual*," while his wife, a quiet, elderly woman, neatly attired in a scarlet rug cloak (a favourite article of dress

among the fair ones of the coast), and a decent snow-white handkerchief simply tied in matron fashion over her head, was turning over some pieces of gingham in an opposite corner.

"Sixpence!" the Dinmont of Clare exclaimed in a tone of expression of strong surprise, while by a jerk of the frame he tossed his heavy great coat higher on his shoulders, as if preparing at once to depart. "No—Mrs Rahilly—take fourpence for the book, an' here 'tis for you."

"I never bought it for the money," said Mrs Rahilly, replacing the book on the shelf.

"Well, what's your lowest offer then? I don't like, as we're ould friends, to lave the money anywhere else, though I protest to my consins, Davy Molony below sthreet offered me the same book for fourpence ha'p'ny."

Mrs Rahilly paused. "Well, then, bein as you say an' ould cushtomer, split the difference, an' say no more about it."

"That I may be blest af I do, now. Here's fourpence ha'p'ny, an' I never'll go back o' what I say."

"Have it for the fi'-penny."

"Oh, ax wool of a goat—what talk it is!"

"Well, maybe *herself* would want another."

"O never heed me," said the woman, smiling and laying down the pattern of gingham, "af it's prayer-books you're talking of, I can say my rosary on my fingers."

"You are attending to those people in the shop, instead of minding your task," said Penny, chiding her little pupil.—"Keep your eyes on the book now. Read on. 'Thirty days—'"

The child read, in a high singing tone, the lesson from her marble-covered notation-book, "Thirty days hath September, April, June an' November, &c." On a sudden she paused, and looking into her cousin's face, said, "Penny, are you goen to die?"

The young maiden started at the suddenness of the question, and then looked fixedly in surprise on the child. "Why do you ask such a question as that, honey?"

"Because Patcy Magrath, he toul't me that his mammy said you wor, an' that she has seen it by you, for you wor growing thinner an' thinner, an' paler an' paler every day, an' that you'd die before long, an' be buried like uncle."

"I hope not," said the poor girl, smiling rather anxiously.

"I hope not aither—for what 'ud I do at all then? I wouldn't have anybody to tache me my lessons or do a hai'porth. Aunt Rahilly doesn't know B from a bull's foot, although she pretends to a dale. I know what I'll do af you die, I'll marry Patcy Magrath, for he's a fine scholar—that's when we're big enough—an' he'll larn me—but what'll I do till then?"

"Mind your tasks, and do as you are bid, honey, and say your prayers regularly, and God will be a father, and uncle, and cousin and all to you. You need fear nothing so long as you do not displease him."

"That's just the way the man with all the wool about his head talked to me in the coort-house, when I toul't upon Dorgan for murderin Uncle—What ails you now, Penny? I can't say a haiport to you ever since uncle was kilt but you begin to cry that way. Are you sick? Because if you are, I'll go an get a physic o' salts from Aunt Rahilly. She has a tub of salts abroad that would cure the world."

At this moment, the sound of Dorgan's name, pronounced by a voice that was familiar to her, in the shop, struck on the elder maiden's ear and prevented her reply. She put the child from her with a sudden "husht," and remained in an attitude of the most anxious attention, with her ear turned towards the half open door.

"I wonder who is it that's mindin the people in the shop *now*," said the child. "Well, Penny, af you wont hear my lesson, I'll go and play tig-touch-iron wit Patey Magrath in the haggard, an' I'll have it for you agin supper."

She slipped out of the house through a back door, leaving Penny too perfectly absorbed in the conversation, which was now passing in

the shop, to answer or even to notice her departure.

"An' is it now they're thinken o' throwen a doubt upon his guilt?" said the farmer. "Here, take a pinch, sir, while the box is open. The little dust o' snuff I had isn't much the better o' you since you took that *dhudogue* out of it, any way. But as for Dorgan, why I seen the guard goen to the gallows with him myself, though I couldn't stop to see the hangen."

"That may be compatible with the limits o' veracity," said the person who had just entered, "but it is an undeniable fact that Dorgan has been approved innocent, and Kinchela, the fisherman from the Head, has come forth and prosecuted his confession before the magistrate as the real perpetrator."

The conversation was here cut short by a deep groan, and a sound, as of a heavy weight descending, in the inner parlour. The plan which had been constructed for breaking the matter to Penny was completely baffled by the awkwardness of the well-meaning pedant, who blurted out that part of his intelligence which comprised the most horrible inference in the very commencement. She had scarcely heard it uttered, when her senses failed her, and she fell on the floor in a strong convulsion fit. When the exertions of her friends, who at once hastened to her assistance, had called her to

some degree of consciousness, she beheld, among the many faces which surrounded her, those of the clergyman of her parish before-mentioned, and the unfortunate agent of the discovery she had made. The former, having ascertained the degree of strength which might now be expected from her, motioned every person out of the room, with the exception of her relative. He then took Penny's hand kindly.

"Are you prepared," he said, "to thank your God for a more pleasing piece of news than that which you have just heard?"

The girl looked in his face with a gaze of bewildered inquiry. Her lips muttered, as if unconsciously, the word "Dorgan," as the thought which floated uppermost in her imagination.

"Read there," said the clergyman, putting into her hands a letter, folded.

The blood rushed forcibly to her cheek, brow, and her very finger-ends, and again recoiled, so as to leave her pale as marble, when she recognized the hand of Dorgan in the superscription. She quickly opened the note, and read as follows:—

MY DEAR PENNY,—(For I may once more with a free heart, thanks be to the most High, call you by that name. It has pleased heaven to make good the word which I spoke on that unfortunate day, when I told my judges that I

felt it within me that I should not die for a deed of which, the Lord knows my heart, and which is since proved, I was wholly clear and innocent. I have got my pardon, for it seems it is a form of law, that when an innocent man is convicted, after suffering imprisonment, and all hardship and anxiety instead of his judges asking *his* forgiveness, 'tis *he* that has to get pardon from them, for being so unfortunate as to be condemned and very nearly hung in the wrong. Now, Penny, this comes by the hand of Father Mahony, to tell you, that of all things in the world, I admire and love you for your conduct on that day, and all through this dreadful business. I know well, my dear girl, how your heart is accusing you at this moment, but give no heed to such thoughts, I beg of you, and let them be as far from your mind as they are from mine, for you did your duty nobly; and Lord Nelson, my glorious and lamented commander, who little thought I'd be brought into such trouble on account of the victory he died in obtaining, could have done no more if he was in your place. I hope, therefore, you will show your good sense, and think no more of what is passed, but take this as the true feeling of his heart from him who is yours until death.

DUKE DORGAN.

To Penelope M'Loughlen,
at Mrs Rahilly's Shop, Carrigaholt.

The heroic generosity with which her lover

thus rose superior to all the petty resentments and jealousies, which are incidental to the passion, even in the most vigorous and straightforward minds, sunk deeply into the heart of the young woman. Although the love which she felt for Dorgan was of that genuine and unaffected kind which is wholly a stranger to the delicate intricacies and refined difficulties, attendant on the progress of this most capricious of affections, in the bosoms of those who boast a higher rank than her, yet she could not but be keenly sensible that she had failed in one of its most essential qualities, an unbounded and immoveable confidence. She raised her eyes, which were overflowing with tears of mingled shame and gratitude, towards the clergyman, when a creaking noise at the door attracted her attention. It opened, and Dorgan entered. Her agitation and confusion became now extreme, nor were they diminished when her lover advanced to her side with a respectful gentleness, and said—

“Penny, you see we meet happier and sooner than we expected. I hope you’ll be glad by what I mentioned to you in the letter, and give me your hand in token that all is forgotten.”

“I give you my hand freely, Dorgan,” the girl replied, still blushing deeply, “and bless your good generous heart, but all cannot be forgotten. I may be friends with you again, but I never can be friends with myself as long as

ever I live. There is a load laid now upon my mind that never will be taken off until the day I die."

Dorgan, assisted by his reverend friend, applied himself, and as it proved, not unsuccessfully, to combat this feeling; after which the latter departed, having seized the opportunity of impressing on both the obligations which they owed to Providence for the turn which their fortunes had taken.

The imagination of the reader may be safely trusted with the details of the ensuing days; the penitence of Kinchela, and the distraction of his aged mother, who could scarcely be persuaded, even by his own assertion, that the son, whom she had found so faultless, could thus suddenly break upon her knowledge in a character so new and hideous. Dorgan took care, on his establishment in his native village, to fulfil the promise which he had made to Kinchela.

About a year after this, the handsome Mrs Dorgan was sitting at the door of her barn, superintending a number of girls who were employed in scutching flax in the interior, when her eye was attracted by an old woman, who raised the hatch of the farm gate, and making a low curtsy, said, "You wouldn't have any kid-skin, rabbit-skins, or goose-quills to sell, ma'am?"

Mrs Dorgan coloured to the very border of her rich tresses when she recognised,

and was recognised in turn, by the card-drawer.

"Well, darlen, didn't it come true what I toul't you that mornen behind the stacks?" she asked with a knowing wink.

"It did, but I have learned to know since that it was more by your good luck than your skill that you hit the mark so cleverly. You said that himself was far away at the time, too, and he was close at our side."

"A' then sure he ought to have more sense than to trust me, a man that spoke like a priest they tell me, before the crowner. But all that is over with me now; for sure I paid Father Malony better than five pounds restitution money, no longer ago than isterday, an' I'm to be tuk into the pale of his flock agin, with a trifle more honestly made wit hare-skins, and written-quills, an' one thing or another that way, an' I'm to live quietly, an' to have nothen more to say to the CARD DRAWING."

The foregoing Tale was suggested by an occurrence which took place some years ago on the estate and even close to the demesne gate of the late John Waller, Esq. of Castletown, in the county of Limerick, a name which will ever be dear and venerable to the hearts of all who remember him who bore it. A cruel

murder had been perpetrated. Many persons were apprehended and executed for the crime, and amongst these a sailor who had only returned to his native village the very evening before the murder was committed! The story went that his clothes had been purloined during his sleep by one of the real delinquents, who escaped detection in the disguise, while the identity of the dress tended to place the crime at the door of the unoffending sailor.

THE END.

JAMES HARRAGAN;

OR,

DO YOU THINK I'D INFORM?

JAMES HARRAGAN was as fine a specimen of an Irishman as could be met with in our own dear country, where the "human form divine," if not famous for very delicate, is at least celebrated for very strong proportions: he was, moreover, a well-educated, intelligent person; that is to say, he could read and write, keep correct accounts of his buying and selling, and managed his farm, consisting of ten good acres of the best land in a part of Ireland where all is good (the Barony of Forth), so as to secure the approbation of an excellent landlord, and his own prosperity. It was a pleasant sight to see the honest farmer bring out the well-fed horse and the neatly appointed car, every Saturday morning, whereon his pretty daughter Sydney journeyed into Wexford, to dispose of the eggs, butter, and poultry, the sale of which aided her father's exertion.

Sydney was rather an unusual name for a young Irish girl; but her mother had been housekeeper to a noble lady, who selected it for her, though it assimilated strangely with Harragan. The maiden herself was lithe, cheerful, industrious, and of a gentle, loving nature; her brown affectionate eyes betokened, as brown eyes always do, more of feeling than of intellect; and her red lips, white teeth, and rich dark hair, entitled her to the claim of rustic beauty. Her mother had been dead about two years, and Sydney, who during her lifetime was somewhat inclined to be vain and thoughtless, had, as her father expressed it, "taken altogether a turn for good," and discharged her duties admirably as mistress of James Harragan's household. She had five brothers, all younger than herself; the two elder were able and willing to assist in the farm, the juniors went regularly to school.

Sorrow for the loss of his wife had both softened and humbled James Harragan's spirit; and when Sydney, disdaining any assistance, sprang lightly into the car, and seated herself in the midst of her rural treasures, her father's customary prayer, "Good luck to you, Sydney, my darling," was increased by the prayer of "May the Lord bless you, and keep you to me, now, and till the day of my death!"

The car went on, Sydney laughing and nodding to her father, while he smiled and returned her salutation, though, when she was

fairly out of sight, he passed the back of his rough hand across his eyes, and muttered, "I almost wish she was not so like her mother!" When James entered his cottage, he sat by the fire, and, taking down a slate that hung above the settle, began to make thereupon sundry calculations, which I do not profess to understand; how long he might have continued so occupied, I cannot determine, for his cogitations were interrupted by the entrance of a gentleman, who was by his side ere he noticed his approach. The usual salutations were exchanged; the best chair dusted, and presented to the stranger; every thing in the house was tendered for his acceptance. "His honour had a long walk, would he have an egg or a rasher for a snack; Sydney was out, but Bessy her cousin was above in the loft, and would get it or anything else in a minute; or maybe he'd have a glass of ale—good it was—Cherry's ale—no better in the kingdom." All Irishmen—and particularly so fine and manly a fellow as James—to be seen to advantage, should be seen in their own houses—CABINS I cannot call such as are tenanted by the warm farmers of this well-cultivated district.

Mr Herrick, however, could not be tempted; he would not suffer the rasher to be cut, nor the ale to be drawn, and James looked sad because his visitor declined accepting his humble but cheerful hospitality.

"James," said Mr Herrick, "I am glad I

found you at home and alone, for I wanted to speak with you. I have long considered you superior to your neighbours. I do no mean as a farmer—though you have twice received the highest prizes which the Agricultural Society bestow—but as a man.”

James looked gratified and said he was so.

“I have found you, James, the first to see improvement, and to adopt it, however much popular prejudice might be against it. You have been ever ready to listen to and act upon the advice of those whom your reason told you were qualified to give it; and you have not been irritated or annoyed when faults, national or individual, have been pointed out to you which can be and ought to be remedied.”

“I believe what your honour says is true; but sure it’s proud and happy we ought to be to have the truth told of us—it is what does not always happen; if it did, poor Ireland would have had more justice done her long ago than ever came to her share yet.”

“And that, James, is also true,” said Mr Herrick; “the Irish character has not only its individual differences, which always must be the case, but it has its provincial, its baronial distinctions.”

“Indeed, sir,” replied Harragan, “there can be no doubt about that; we should be sorry, civilized as we are here, to be compared to the wild rangers of Connaught, or to the stayed, quiet, tradesman-like people of the north.”

"The northerns are a fine prudent people," said Mr Herrick, "notwithstanding your prejudice; but what you have said is only another proof that persons may write very correctly about the north of Ireland, and yet, unless they see the south, form a very limited, or, it may be, erroneous idea of the character of the southernns. The Irish are more difficult to understand than people imagine. You are a very unmanageable people, James," added the gentleman, good humouredly.

"Bedad, sir, I suppose you're right; some of us are, I dare say. And now, sir, I suppose there is a reason for that."

"There is," answered his friend. "You are an unmanageable people, *because of your prejudices.*"

"That's your old story against us, Mr Herrick," said James; "and yet you can't deny but I've been often led by your honour, and for my good; I'll own to that."

"James," continued his friend, "will you answer me one question? Were you, or were you not, at Gerald Casey's on Monday week?"

James's countenance fell, it positively elongated, at the question. So great was the change, that those who did not know the man might have imagined he had committed a crime, and anticipated immediate punishment. "At Gerald Casey's?" he repeated.

Mr Herrick drew a letter—a soiled, dirty-

looking letter—from his pocket, and slowly repeated the question.

"I was, sir," he answered, resting his back against the dresser, and pressing his open palms upon the board, as if the action gave him strength.

"Who was there, James?"

"Is it who was in it, sir? Why, there was——Bedad, sir, there was——Oh, then, it's the bad head I have at remembering—I forgot who was there." And the countenance of James assumed, despite his exertions, a lying expression that was totally unworthy his honest nature.

"James," observed Mr Herrick, "you used not to have a bad memory. I have heard you speak of many trifling acts of kindness my father showed you when you were a boy of twelve years old."

The farmer's face was in a moment suffused with crimson, and he interrupted him with the grateful warmth of an affectionate Irish heart. "Oh, sir, sure you don't think I'm worse than the poor dog that follows night and day at my foot? You don't think I've no heart in my body?"

"I was talking of your memory," said Mr Herrick, quietly; "and I ask you again to tell me who were at Gerald Casey's on Monday week?"

"I left Gerald Casey's before dusk, sir; and it's what took me in it was——"

"I don't ask you when you left it, or what took you there. I only ask you who were present?"

James saw there was no use in equivocating, for that Mr Herrick would be answered. He was, as I have said, an excellent fellow; yet he had, in common with his countrymen, a very provoking way of evading a question; but, anxious as he was to evade this, he could not manage it. Mr Herrick looked him so steadfastly in the face, that he slowly answered, "I'd rather not say one way or other who was there or who was not there. I've an idea, from something I heard this morning, before the little girl went into Wexford, that I know now what your honour's driving at. And sure," and his face deepened in colour as he continued—"and sure, Mr Herrick, 'do you think I'd inform?'"

Mr Herrick was not astonished at the answer he received. On the contrary, he was quite prepared for it, and prepared also to combat a principle that militates so strongly against the comfort and security of those who reside in Ireland.

"Will you," he inquired, "tell me what you mean by the word 'inform?'"

"It's a mean, dirty practice, sir," replied Harragan, "to be repeating every word one hears in a neighbour's house."

"So it is," answered the gentleman; "and il, mean practice to repeat what is said

merely from a love or gossip. But suppose a person, being accidentally one of a party, heard a plot formed against your character, perhaps your life, and not only concealed the circumstance, but absolutely refused to give any clue by which such a conspiracy could be detected——”

“Oh, sir,” interrupted Harragan, “that’s nothing here nor there. I couldn’t tell in the grey of the evening who went in or out of the place; I had no call to any one, and I don’t want any one to have any call to me.”

“You must know perfectly well who was there,” said Mr Herrick. “The case is simply this: a gentleman in this neighbourhood has received two anonymous letters, attacking the character of a person who has been confidentially employed by him for some years. James Harragan, *you know who wrote those letters*; and I ask you how, as an *honest man*, you can lay your head upon your pillow and *sleep*, knowing that an equally honest man may be deprived of the means to support his young family, and be turned adrift upon the world through the positive malice of those who are envious of his prosperity and good name.”

James looked very uncomfortable, but did not trust himself to speak.

“I repeat, you know by whom these letters are written.”

“As I hope to be saved!” exclaimed James, “I saw no writing—not the scratch of a pen!”

"Harragan," continued Mr Herrick, "it would be well for our country if many of its inhabitants were not so quick at invention."

"I have not told a lie, sir."

"No, but you have done worse—you have equivocated. Though you did not see the letter written, *you knew it was written*; and an equivocation is so cowardly, that I wonder an Irishman would resort to it; a lie is in itself cowardly, but an equivocation is more cowardly still."

Harragan for a moment looked shillalas and crabthorns at his friend, for such he had frequently proved himself to be, but made no further observation, simply confining himself to the change and repetition of the sentences—"Do you think I'd inform?" "Not one belonging to me ever turned informer."

"Am I then," said Mr Herrick, rising, "to go away with the conviction, that you know an injury has been done to an innocent person, and yet will not do anything to convict a man guilty of a moral assassination?"

"A what, sir?"

"A moral murder."

"Look here, sir; one can't fly in the face of the country. If I was to tell, my life would not be safe either in or out of my own house; you ought to know this. Besides, there is something very mean in an *informer*."

"It is very sad," replied Mr Herrick, "that

a spirit of combination for *evil* more than for *good* destroys the confidence which otherwise the gentry and strangers would be disposed to place in the peasantry of Ireland. As long as a man fears to speak and act like a man, so long as he dare not hear the proud and happy sound of his own voice in condemnation of the wicked, and in praise of the upright—so long, in fact, as an Irishman dare not speak what he knows—so long, *and no longer*, will Ireland be insecure and its people scorned as cowards!"

"As cowards!" repeated James, indignantly.

"Ay," said Mr Herrick; "there is a moral as well as a physical courage. The man who, in the heat of battle, faces a cannon ball, or who, in the hurry and excitement of a fair or pattern, exposes his bare head to the rattle of shillalas and clan-alpines without shrinking from punishment or death, is much inferior to the man who has the superior moral bravery to act in accordance with the dictates of his own conscience, and does right while those around him do wrong."

"I dare say that's all very true, sir," said James, scratching his head; adding, while most anxious to change the subject, "it's a pity yer honour wasn't a councillor or a magistrate, a priest, minister, or friar itself, then you'd have great sway entirely with your words and your learning."

"Not more than I have at present. Do you

think it is a wicked thing to take away the character of an honest man?"

"To be sure I do, sir."

"And yet you become a party to the act."

"How so, sir?"

"By refusing to bring, or assist in bringing, to justice those who have endeavoured to ruin the father of a large family. Do you believe so many murders and burnings would take place if the truth was spoken?"

"No, sir."

"That's a direct answer from an Irishman for once. If the evil-disposed, the disturbers of the country, knew that truth would be spoken, disturbances would soon cease; you believe this, and yet, by your silence, you shield those whom you *know* to be bad, and despise with all your heart and soul."

"I don't want to have any call to them one way or other, good, bad, or indifferent," answered James.

"Very well," said Mr Herrick, thoroughly provoked at the man's obstinacy, and rising to leave the cottage; "you say you wish to have no call to them. But mark *me*, James Harragan: when the spirit of anonymous letter-writing gets into a neighbourhood—when wicked-minded persons can destroy either a man's reputation or his life with equal security, there is no knowing where the evil may stop, or who shall escape its influence. The knowledge of the extent to which these

secret conspiracies are carried, deters capitalists from settling amongst us; they may have security for their money, but they have none for their lives; if they offend by taking land, or offering opposition to received opinions, their doom may be fixed; those whom they have trusted will know of that doom, and yet no one will come forward to save them from destruction."

"Sir," said Harragan, "*secret information* is sometimes given."

"I would accept no man's *secret information*," answered Mr Herrick, for he was an upright man, perhaps too uncompromising for the persons with whom he had to deal; "justice should not only be *even-handed*, but *open-handed*; it is a reproach to a country when the law finds it necessary to offer rewards for *secret information*. I wish I could convince you, James, of the difference which exists between a person who devotes his time to peeping and prying for the purpose of conveying information to *serve himself*, and him who speaks the truth, from the upright and honourable motive of seeing justice done to his fellow-creatures."

"I see the *difference* clear enough, sir," replied the farmer; "but none of my people ever turned informers. I'll have no call to it, and it's no use saying any more about the matter; there are plenty of people in the country can tell who was there as well as I—I'll have no call to it. When I went in the place, I little

thought of who I'd meet there, and I'll go bail it's long before I'll trouble it again. There's enough said and done now."

"A good deal *said*, certainly," rejoined Mr Herrick, "but nothing *done*. There are parts of the country where I know that my entering into this investigation would endanger my life, but, thank God, that is not the case here. I will pursue my investigation to the uttermost, and do not despair of discovering the delinquent."

"I hope you may with all my heart and soul, sir," replied the farmer.

"Then why not aid me? If you are sincere, why not assist?"

And again James Harragan muttered, "Do you think I'd inform?"

"I declare, before heaven!" exclaimed Mr Herrick, "you are the most provoking people under the sun to deal with."

"I ask your honour's pardon," said James, slyly; "but you have not lived long enough in foreign parts to know that."

"Your readiness will not drive me from my purpose; I repeat you are the most provoking people in the world to deal with. Convince an Englishman or a Scotchman, and having convinced his reason, you may be certain he will act upon that conviction; but you, however convinced *your* reason may be, continue to act from the dictates of *your* prejudice. Remember this, however, James Harragan:

you have refused to pluck out the arrow which an unseen hand has planted in the bosom of an excellent and industrious man—take care that the same invisible power *does not aim a shaft against yourself.*”

Mr Herrick quitted the cottage more in sorrow than in anger; and after he was gone, James Harragan thought over what he had said; he was quite ready to confess its truth, but prejudice still maintained its ascendancy. “Aim a shaft against myself,” he repeated; “I don’t think any of them would do that, though I am sorry to say many as good and better than I have been forced to fly the country through secret malice; it is a bad thing, but times ’ll mend, I hope.”

Alas! James Harragan is not the only man in my beloved country who satisfies himself with *hoping* that times will mend, without *endeavouring* to mend them. “Aim a shaft against myself,” he again repeated. “Well, I’m sure, what Mr Herrick said is true; but, for all that, I couldn’t inform!”

The fact was that, reason as he would, James could not get rid of his prejudice; he could not make the distinction between the man who turns the faults and vices of his fellow-creatures to his own account, and he who, *for the good of others*, simply and unselfishly speaks the truth.

Time passed on: Mr Herrick, of course, sailed in his efforts to discover the author of

the anonymous letter; the person against whom it was directed, although protected by his landlord, was ultimately obliged to relinquish his employment, and seek in other lands the peace and security he could not find in his own; he might, to be sure, have weathered the storm, for his enemies, as will be seen by the following anecdote, had no immediate intention of persecuting him to the death. A stranger who bore a great resemblance to the person so obnoxious to those who met at the smith's forge, was attacked while travelling on an outside car in the evening, and in the immediate neighbourhood, and beaten most severely before his assailants discovered they had ill used the wrong man! Nothing could exceed their regret when they discovered their mistake.

"Ah, thin, who are ye at all a' all?" inquired one fellow, after having made him stand up, that they might again knock him down more to their satisfaction; "sure ye're not within a foot as tall as the boy we're afther. Is it crooked on the back ye are on purpose? Well, now it's heart sorry we are for the *mistake*, and hope it'll never happen to ye again, to be like another man, and he an *outlawyer*, as a body may say, having received enough notice to quit long ago, if he'd only heed it, which we'll make him do, or have his life, after we admonish him onst more, as we've done you by mistake, with a taste of a bating, which we'd

ask you to tell him, if you know him; there, we'll lay you on the car, as aisy as if you war n yer mother's lap, and ask ye to forgive us, which we hope you'll do, as it was all a *mistake!* and no help for it!"

The victim of "the mistake," however, who was an Englishman, suffered for more than three months, and cannot comprehend to this day why those who attacked him so furiously were not sought out and brought to justice. He never could understand why an honest man should refuse to criminate a villain. The poor fellow for whom the beating was intended was not slow to discover the fact, and, with a heavy heartache, bade adieu to his native land, which, but for the sake of his young children, he would hardly have quitted even to preserve his own life.

James Harragan did not note those occurrences without much sorrow; he saw his daughter Sydney's eyes red for three entire days from weeping the departure of the exile's wife, whom she loved with the affection of a sister; and he had the mortification to see his beloved barony distinguished in the papers as a "disturbed district" from the *mistake* to which we have alluded, at the very time when many of the gentry were sleeping with their doors unfastened. James Harragan knew perfectly well that if he had spoken the truth, all this could have been prevented. Still time passed on. Mr Herrick seldom visited

James; and though he admired his crops, and spoke kindly to his children, the farmer felt he had lost a large portion of the esteem he so highly valued.

But when a man goes on in the full tide of worldly prosperity, he does not continue long in trouble upon minor matters. Sydney's eyes were no longer red; nay, they were more sparkling than ever, for they were brightened by a passion to which she had been hitherto a stranger. And Sydney, though gifted with as much constancy as most people, if she did not forget, certainly did not think as frequently as before of her absent friend. Sydney, in fact, was what is called—in love; which, I believe, is acknowledged by all who have been in a similar dilemma, to be a very confusing, perplexing situation. That poor Sydney found it so, was evident, for she became subject to certain flushings of the cheek and beatings of the heart, accompanied by a confusion of the intellectual faculties, which puzzled her father for a time quite as much as herself. She would call rabbits chickens, and chickens rabbits, in the public market, and was known to have given forty-two new laid eggs for a shilling, when she ought only to have given thirty-six.

Then in her garden, her own pet garden, she sowed mignonette and hollyoaks together, and wondered how it was that what she fancied sweet pea, had come up “love lies bleeding.”

Dear, warm, affectionate Sydney Harragan! She was a model of all that is excellent in simple guileless woman; and when Ralph Furlong drew from her a frank but most modest confession that his love was returned, and that "if her father did not put again it," she would gladly share his cottage and his fortunes, there was not a young disengaged farmer in the county that would not have envied him his "good luck."

Soon after James Harragan's consent had been obtained to a union which he believed would secure the happiness of his darling child, the farmer was returning from the fair of New Ross, where he had been to dispose of some spare farming-stock; and as he trotted briskly homeward, passing the well-known mountain, or, as it is called, "Rock" of Carrickburn, he was overtaken by a man, to whom he had seldom spoken since the evening when he had seen him and some others at Gerald Casey's forge. Many, many months had elapsed since then. And, truth to say, as the young man had removed to a cottage somewhere on the banks of the blue and gentle river Slaney, James had often hoped that he might never see him again.

"I'm glad I overtook you, Mr Harragan," he said, urging his long lean narrow mare, close to the stout well-fed cob of the comfortable farmer. "It's a fine bright evening for the time of year. I intended coming to you

next week, having something particular to talk about."

"Nothing that concerns me, I fancy," replied Harragan, stiffly.

"I hope it does, and that it will; times are changed since we met last—with me particularly." Harragan made no reply, and they rode on together in silence for some time longer.

"Mr Harragan, though you are a trustworthy man as ever steeped in shoe leather, I am afraid you haven't a good opinion of me."

"Whatever opinion I may have, you know I kept it to myself," replied the farmer.

"Thank you for nothing," was the characteristic reply.

"Ye're welcome," rejoined James, as drily. Again they trotted silently on their way, until the stranger suddenly exclaimed, reining up his mare at the same moment, "I'll tell you what my business would be with you; there's nothing like speaking out of the face at onst."

"You did not always think so," said the farmer.

"Oh, sir, aisy now; let bygones be bygones; the country's none the worse of getting rid of one who was ever and always minding other people's business; and you yourself, Mr Harragan, are none the worse for not having high-bred people ever poking their noses in yer place!"

"Say what you have to say at onst," observed James; "the evening will soon close

in, and the little girl I have at home thinks it long till I return."

"It's about her I want to spake," said the stranger. "If you'll take the trouble some fine morning early to ride over to where the dark green woods of Castle Boro dip their boughs in the Slaney, ye'd see that I have as tidy a place, as well filled a *haggard*, and as well managed fields as any houlder of ten acres of land in the country; besides that, I have my eye on another farm that's out of lease, and if all goes right I'll have it. Now, ye see my sister's married, and my mother's dead, and I've no one to look after things; and for every pound ye'd tell down with yer daughter, I'd show a pound's worth. And so, Mr Harragan, I thought that of all the girls in the country I'd prefer Sydney; and if we kept company for a while"—he turned his handsome but sinister and impudent countenance towards the astonished farmer, adding—"I don't think she'd refuse me."

"You might be mistaken for all that," replied James, grasping his stout stick still more tightly in his hand, from a very evident desire to knock the fellow down.

"Well, now, I don't think I should," he replied, with vulgar confidence; "it's the aisiest thing in life to manage a purty girl, if one has the knack, and I've managed so many."

"Ride on!" interrupted the farmer indignantly. "Ride on, before I am tempted to

knock ye off the poor starved beast that ye haven't the heart to feed! You marry my Sydney—*you!*—a rascal like *you!* Why, Stephen Murphy, you must be gone mad—Sydney married with a cowardly backbiter! I'd rather dress her shroud with my own hands. A—a—ride on, I tell you," he continued, almost choked with passion; "there is nothing, I believe, that you would think too bad to do. And, hark ye, take it for your comfort that she is going to be married to one worthy of her, and I her father say so."

"Oh, very well! very well!" said the bravo; "as you please, Mr Harragan, as you please; I meant to pay yer family a compliment—a compliment for yer silence, ye understand me; not that I hould myself over and above obliged for that either. Ye like to take care of yerself, for the sake of yer little girl, I suppose; and the counthry might grow too hot for you, as well as for others, if ye made free with yer tongue. No harm done; but if I had spaking with the girl for one hour, I'd put any sweetheart in the county, barring myself, out of her head. I'll find out the happy young man, and wish him joy. Oh, maybe I *wont* wish joy to the boy for whom I'm insulted," he added, inflicting a blow upon the bare ribs of the poor animal he rode, that made her start; "maybe I *wont* wish him joy, and give him Steve Murphy's blessing. Starved as ye call my haste, there's twice the

blood in her that creeps through the flesh of yer overfed cob;" and, sticking the long solitary iron spur which he wore on his right heel into the mare, he flew past James Harragan, flourishing his stick with a whirl, and shouting so loud, that the mountain echoes of the wild rocks of Carrickburn repeated the words "joy! joy!" as if they had been thrown into their caverns by the fiend of mockery himself.

Instantly James urged his stout horse forward, crying at the top of his voice to Murphy to stop; but either the animal was tired, or the mare was endowed with supernatural swiftness, for he soon lost sight even of the skirts of Murphy's coat, which floated loosely behind him. "The scoundrel!" he muttered to himself, while the gallop of his steed subsided into a heavy but tolerably rapid trot; "I wanted to tell him to take care how he meddled with me or mine. Sydney! Sydney indeed! And the rascal's assurance! He never spoke three words to my girl in his life! It's a good thing we're rid of him here any way. I hope he's not a near neighbour of any of Furlong's people, that's all; his impudence—to me who knew him so well! Sarve me right," he thought within himself, when his mutterings had subsided; "sarve me right, to keep the secret of such a fellow. I suffered those who war innocent to leave the country, and he to talk of paying my family a

compliment! Mr Herrick said it would come home to me, and so it has. I'm sure Murphy must have been *overtaken*, or he'd never dare to propose such a thing. But, then, if he was, why, the devil takes the weight off a tipsy man's tongue, and then all's out."

It was night before Harragan arrived at his farm, and there the warm smile and bright eyes of his Sydney were ready to greet his descent from the back of his stout steed, and the bridegroom elect was ready to hold the horse; and his sons, now growing up rapidly to manhood, crowded round him; and his dog, far more respectable in appearance than the generality of Irish cottage dogs, leaped to lick his hand; and the cat, with tail erect, purred at the door; the very magpie, that Sydney loved for its love of mischief, stretched its neck through its prison bars to greet the farmer's return to his cottage home.

"There's no use in talking," said James Harragan, after the conclusion of a meal which few small farmers are able to indulge in—I mean supper. "There's no use in talking, Sydney, but I can't spare you; it's a certain fact, I cannot spare you. Furlong must find a farm near us, and live here; why, wanting my little girl, I should be like a sky without a sun."

"Farms are not to be had here; they are too valuable to be easily obtained, as you well know," replied the young man; "but sure

she'll not be a day's ride from you, sir, unless, indeed, my brother should have the luck to get a farm for me that he's after by the Slaney, a little on the other side of the ferry of Mount Garrett; but that is such a bit of ground as is hard to be met with." The father hardly noticed Furlong's reply, for his eyes and thoughts were fixed upon his child, until the word "Slaney" struck upon his ear, and brought back Murphy, his proposal, his threat, and his flying horse, at once to his remembrance.

"What did you say of a farm on the Slaney?" he inquired, hastily.

"That I have the chance, the more than chance, of as purty a bit of land with a house, a slated house upon it, on the banks of the silver Slaney, as ~~ever was~~ turned for wheat or barley, to say nothing of green crops that would bate the world for quality or quantity. My brother has known the cows there yield fourteen or sixteen quarts. I did not like to say anything about it before, for I was afraid I should never have the luck of it, but he wrote me to-day to say that he was almost sure of it, though some black-hearted villain had written letters without a name to the landlord, and agent, and steward, against us. Think of that now. We that never did a hard turn to man, woman, or child in the country."

James Harragan shuddered; and, passing

his arm round Sydney's neck, drew her towards him with a sort of instinctive affection, like a bird that shelters her nestling beneath its wing, when it hears the wild-hawk's scream upon the breeze.

"Sydney shall never go there," said Harragan.

"Not go to the banks of the Slaney!" exclaimed her eldest brother. "Why, father, you don't know what a place it is—you don't know what you say. Besides, an hour and a half would take you quite easy to where Furlong means. You make a great deal too much fuss about the girl." And having so said, he stooped down and kissed her cheek, adding, "Never mind, father; I'll bring you home a daughter that 'ill be twice as good as Sydney. I'll just take one more summer out of myself, that's all, and then I'll marry; may be I won't show a pattern wife to the country." And then the youth was rated on the subject of bachelors' wives. And he retaliated; and then his sister threatened to box his ears, and was not slow in putting the threat into execution; and soon afterwards, Furlong rose to return home; and Sydney remembered she had forgotten to see to the health and comforts of a delicate calf; and though the servant and her brothers all offered to go, she would attend to it herself; and, five minutes after, her father went to the door, heard her light laugh and low murmuring voice, and saw her stand-

ing with her lover in the moonlight—he outside, and she inside the garden-gate, her hand clasped within his, and resting on the little pier that was clustered round with woodbine. She looked so lovely in that clear pure light, that her father's heart ached from very anguish at the possibility of any harm happening to one so dear. He longed to ask Furlong if he knew Murphy, but a choking sensation in his throat prevented him. And when Sydney returned, he caught her to his bosom, and burst into a flood of such violent tears, as strong men seldom shed.

The poisoned chalice was approaching his own lips. What would he not have given at that moment that he had acceded to Mr Herrick's proposal!—for had Murphy's villany become public, he must have quitted the country. How did he, even then, repent that he had not yielded to his reason instead of his prejudice.

Young Furlong was at a loss to account for the steady determination with which, at their next meeting, his intended father-in-law opposed his taking a farm in every way so advantageous; James hardly dared acknowledge to himself, much less impart to another, the dread he entertained of Steve Murphy's machinations; this was increased tenfold, when he found that he was the person who not only desired, but had offered for that identical farm a heavier rent than he would ever have been

able to pay for it. 'The landlord, well aware of this fact, and knowing that' a rack-rent destroys first the land, secondly, the tenant, and ultimately the landlord's property, had decided on bestowing his pet farm as a reward to the superior skill and industry of a young man whose enemies were too cowardly to attempt to substantiate their base charges against him.

I can only repeat my often expressed desire, that every other Irish landlord acted in the same manner. It would be impossible to convey an idea of how continually James Harragan's mind dwelt upon Steve Murphy's threat; at first he tried if Sydney's love towards Furlong was to be shaken, but that he found impossible.

"If you withdraw your consent, father," she said, "after having given it, and being perfectly unable to find a single fault with him, I can only say I will not disobey you; but, father, I will never marry—I will never take to any as I took to him, nor you need not expect it; you shall not make me disobedient, father, but you may break my heart." Sydney, resigned and suffering, pained her father more than Sydney remonstrating against injustice. She had before shown him how hard it was, not only after encouraging, but actually accepting Furlong, to dismiss him without reason, and had reproached him in an agony of bitter feeling for his inconsistency. When

this did not produce the desired effect, her cheek grew pale, her step languid, her eyes lost their gentle brightness, and her eldest brother ventured to tell his father "that he was digging his daughter's grave!" The disappointment of the young man beggars description; he declared he would enlist, go to sea, "quit the country," break his heart, shoot any who put "betwixt them," and, after many prayers, used every possible and impossible threat, except the one which the Irish so rarely either threaten or execute, that of self-destruction, to induce James to alter his resolution; and James, unable to stand against this domestic storm, did of course retract; and the consequence was, that he lost by this changing mood the confidence of his children, who had ever till then regarded him with the deepest affection. He dared not communicate the reason of his first change, for doing so would have betrayed the foolish and unfortunate secret he had persevered in keeping, in opposition to common sense, and the estrangement of an old and valuable friend; he could not witness the returned happiness of his children without foreboding that something was to occur that would completely destroy it; and the joyous laughter of his daughter, at one time the sweet music of his household, was sure to send him forth with an aching heart.

Nor was young Furlong without his anxieties; he received more than one anony-

mous letter, threatening that if he did not immediately give up all thoughts of the farm, he would suffer for it; the notices were couched in the usual terms, which, in truth, I care not to repeat; it is quite enough to say that they differed in no respect from others of a similar kind, and with a like intention. However inclined the young man might feel to despise such hints, the experience of the country unfortunately proved that they ought not to be disregarded; but his brother, stronger of heart and spirit, argued that their faction was too powerful, their friends too numerous, to leave room for fear; that their own country was (as it really is) particularly quiet; and that, as Mr Harragan was "so humoursome," the best way would be to say nothing at all about it; that it was evident those who tried to set the landlord against them, having failed in their design, resolved to try the effect of personal intimidation; concluding by observing, "that it was the best way to go on easy," and "never heeding," until after the lease was signed, and the wedding over, and then they'd "see about it!" However consistent this mode of reasoning might be with Irish feeling, it was very sad to perceive how ready the Furlongs were to trust to the strong arm of the people instead of appealing to the strong arm of the law. I wish the peasantry and their friends could perceive how they degrade themselves in the scale of civilised society by

such a course; it is this perpetual taking of all laws, but particularly the law of revenge, into their own hands, that keeps up the hue and cry against them throughout England. I confess time has been when there was one law for the rich and another for the poor, but it is so no longer; and humane lawgivers and administrators of law grow sick at heart when they perceive that they labour in vain for the domestic peace of Ireland.

A few days before the appointed time arrived when Sydney Harragan should become Sydney Furlong, she received a written declaration of love, combined with an offer of marriage, from Murphy. He watched secretly about the neighbourhood until an opportunity arrived for him to deliver it himself. Sydney, to whom he was almost unknown, at first gave a civil yet firm refusal; but when he persevered, she became indignant, and said one or two bitter words, which he swore never to forget. She hardly knew why she concealed from her father the circumstance, which, upon consideration, she was almost tempted to believe a jest; but she did not even mention it to her brothers, fearing it might cause a quarrel, and every Irishwoman knows how much easier it is commenced than quelled. Moreover, one mystery is sure to beget another.

At last the eventful day arrived—Sydney, all hopes and blushes, her brothers full of frolic and fun, the bride's-maids arrayed in

their best, and busied in setting the house in order for the ceremony, which, according to ancient Catholic custom, was to take place in the afternoon at the dwelling of the bride.

"Did ye ever see such a frown over the face of a man in yer born days?" whispered Essy Hays to her sister-maid. "Do but just look at the masther, and see how his eyes are set on his daughter, and she reading her prayers like a good Christian, one eye out of the window and the other on her book. Well, she is a purty girl, and it's no wonder so few chances were going for others, and she to the fore."

"Speak for yourself!" exclaimed Jane Temple, tossing her fair ringlets back from her blue eyes. "She is purty for a dark-skinned girl, there's no denying it."

"Dark haired, not dark skinned!" said Essy indignantly; "the darlint! She's the very moral of an angel. I wish to my heart the masther would not look at her so melancholy. *May be he's thinking how like her poor dead mother she is!* My! if here isn't his reverence (I know the cut of the grey mare, so fat and so smoothly jogging over the hill), and Mr Furlong not come! He went to his brother across Ferry Carrig yesterday, and was to sleep at his aunt's in Wexford last night; I think he might have been here by this. Well, if it was me, I would be affronted; it is not very late, to be sure, only for a bridegroom."

"Whisht, Essy, will you," returned Jane, "for fear she'd hear you; I never saw so young a bride take so early to the prayers; it seems as if something hung over her and her father for trouble."

"I wonder ye're not ashamed of yerself, Jane," exclaimed the warm-hearted Essy, "to be raising trouble at such a time. Whisht, if there isn't the bridegroom's brother trotting up to the priest. What a handsome bow he makes his reverence, his hat right off his head with the flourish of a new shillala; but, good luck to us all, what ails the masther now."

James Harragan also had seen the bridegroom's brother as he rode up the hill which fronted their dwelling, and sprang to his feet in an instant. When the heart is fully and entirely occupied by a beloved object, and that object is absent, alarm for its safety is like an electric shock, commencing one hardly knows how, but startling in its effects. Sydney looked in her father's face and screamed; while he, dreading that she had read the half-formed thoughts which were born of fear within his bosom at the sight of the bridesman without the bridegroom, uttered an imperfect assurance that "all was well—all must be well—Ralph had waited for his aunt—old ladies required attention—and, no doubt, they would arrive together." With this assurance he hastened to the door to meet the priest and his companion, and his heart resumed its usual

beatings when he observed the jovial expression of the old priest's face, and the *rollicking* air with which the bridesman bowed to the bride, who crouched behind her father, anxious to hear the earliest news, and yet held back by that sweet modesty which enshrines the hearts of my gentle countrywomen.

"Where's Ralph?" inquired the farmer, while holding the stirrup for his reverence to dismount.

"That's a *nate* question, to be sure," answered his brother. "Where should he be? And so, Miss Sydney, you asked Mr Herrick to come to the wedding, and never tould any one of it, by way of a surprise to us; that was very purty of you, and that's the top of his new beaver coming along the hedge. Well, it's quite time Ralph showed himself, I think, and we in waiting."

"Don't be foolish, Harry Furlong!" exclaimed the farmer, hastily. "You know very well that Ralph is not here."

"Well, that's done to the life," said the light-hearted fellow; "that's not bad for a very big—— I mustn't say it before the bride; but it's as bold-faced a story as ever I heard. Not here, then, where is he?"

"With his aunt, I daresay, if you don't know," answered Essy.

"Oh, you're in the mischief, too, are you, bright-eyed one? Why, you know he's hid here on the sly to surprise us. Aunt indeed!

To be sure he's with his ould aunt Bell and his bride alone. What a mighty quare Irishman he must be. I'll advise him not to come to you for a character, whatever I may do; eh, Essy?"

"Will you give over bothering?" she said. "Look at the colour Sydney's turned, and see to the masther; the Lord be betwixt us and harm, none of your nonsense, but tell us where is Ralph?"

The aspect of things changed in an instant. Harry saw that his brother was not there, concealed as he had supposed him to be in mere playfulness, and knew that he was not with his aunt Bell. He knew, moreover, that he had parted from him the night before at the other side of Ferry Carrig; that he was then on his way to Wexford, where he had promised to meet him in the morning; that he had been to their aunt's to keep his tryste, but that he had felt no uneasiness on finding Ralph not there, concluding, that instead of going to the town, he had gone to his bride's house in the country, for which he had intended mirthfully to reproach him when they met. Now seriously alarmed, his anxiety to prevent Sydney from partaking of his feelings almost deprived him of the power of speech; but he had said enough, and, just as Mr Herrick crossed the threshold, the bride fainted at his feet.

Nothing could be more appalling than the

change effected in a few moments in the expression of the farmer's face. While each was engaged in imparting to the other hopes for the bridegroom's reappearance, and reasons for his delay, Harragan, having put forth every other assistance, was bending over his insensible child, on the very bed from which she had that morning risen in the fulness of almost certain happiness for years to come. Alas! how little can we tell upon what of ~~all~~ we cherish in this changing world, each rising sun may set!

"If she's not dead," he muttered to himself, "she will die soon. May the Lord deliver me!—the Lord deliver me!" he continued, while chafing her temples; "I saw it all along, like a shroud above me, to fall round her—I did—I did. Who's that?" he inquired, fiercely, as the door gently opened, and Mr Herrick entered within its sanctuary; "oh, it's you, sir, is it? you may come in; I thought it was some of them light-hearted who don't know trouble. Shut them out; my trouble's heavy, sir; look at her, Mr Herrick; and this was the wedding my little girl asked you to, out of friendliness to her father. Her father! why, the Holy Father who is above us all knows that as sure as the beams of the blessed sun are shining on her deathly cheek, so sure am I Ralph Furlong's murderer! You need not draw back, Mr Herrick. I *know* he's murdered; I felt struck with the know-

ledge of his death, *and I could not help it, the minute his brother (God help him!) laughed in my face. Don't raise up her head, sir; she'll come to soon enough—too soon, like a spirit that comes to the earth but to leave it. I'm not mad, Mr Herrick, though maybe I look so. Be it by fire or water, or steel or bullet, Ralph Furlong's a corpse, and I'll inform this time. I've heard tell the man that betrayed Christ wept after. What good war his tears? What good my informing now? but I will—I will. I'll make a clean breast for onst. I'll do the right thing now, if all the devils of hell tear me to pieces! I tell you, sir, Steve Murphy did it!—black-hearted, cunning-headed, and bloody-handed he was, from the time his mother begged with him from door to door for what she did not want, and taught him lies by every hedgerow and green bank through the country. I'm punished, Mr Herrick, I'm punished. If I'd informed—but I'll not call it informing—if I'd told the truth when you wanted me about the letters of the forge, he would not have been in the country to commit murder. She's coming to, now, sir; she's coming to."*

Gradually poor Sydney revived, but *only* to suffer more than she had as yet gone through. The people were greatly astonished at the conviction which rested on the farmer's mind that the young man had been murdered, a belief which extended itself to his daughter;

for, from the moment that she heard that Ralph was not with his aunt, it appeared as if every vestige of hope had vanished from her mind. The men of the company set forward an immediate inquiry; the neighbourhood poured forth, every cottage was emptied of its inmates, the women flocking to the farmer's house to pour consolation and hope into the bosom of the bereaved bride, and the men to assist in a search, which, at the noon-day hour, was a very uncommon occurrence. It is very rarely, indeed, that the Irish peasantry seek assistance either from the police or military force; though they are fond of going to law, they detest the law connected with the law. But Mr Herrick promptly rode into Wexford, and having made the necessary inquiries, and ascertained that young Furlong had not been seen at the town, he informed the proper authorities of his mysterious disappearance, and then turned his horse towards Ferry Carrig, to ascertain from the gate-keeper who had passed over the bridge the preceding evening.

Ferry Carrig is one of the picturesque spots which are not so frequently seen by those who journey through my native country. On one side of the Slaney—here a river of glorious width—rises, boldly and wildly, a conical hill, upon the summit of which stands out, in frowning ruins, one of the boldest of the square towers, of which so many were erected

by the enterprising Fitz-Stephen. The opposite side of the bridge is guarded by a rock, not so steep or magnificent as its neighbour, but not less picturesque, though its character is different; the one is absolutely garlanded with heaths, wild-flowers, and the golden-blossoming furze; while the other, affording barely a spot for vegetation, seems planted for eternity—so stern, and fixed, and rugged, that nothing save the actual destruction of the universe could shake its firm foundation.

The bridge erected across this beautiful water is of singular construction, and partakes of the wildness of the ^{side}; the planks are not fastened at ^{either} end, and the noise and motion has a startling effect to one not used to such modes of transit. When ^{Mr} Herrick arrived at the toll-house, he learned that many inquiries had already been made, and that all the toll-keeper could say was, "that positively Ralph Furlong, whom he knew as well as his own son, had not crossed the bridge the preceding evening, although he had been on the look-out for him." The elder Furlong had accompanied his brother to within a mile of the Eniscorthy side of the bridge, so his disappearance must have occurred between the spot where they separated and the Bridge of Ferry Carrig. Nothing could exceed the energy and exertion to discover the lost bridegroom; every inquiry was made, every

break explored, the rivers dragged, but no trace of Ralph Furlong was obtained. Mr Herrick returned to the farm, and it was heart-breaking to observe the totally hopeless expression that was pictured on Sydney's beautiful face.

"There is no knowing," said the kind gentleman, with a cheerfulness he but imperfectly assumed; "there is no knowing—he may have left the country."

"No," was her reply; "*he would never have deserted me!*" Thus did her trust in her lover's fidelity outlive all hope of meeting him alive in this changing world.

In the meantime, James Harragan had proceeded alone to Steve Murphy's cottage. The sun had set, when he found him sitting by his fire, not alone, for his sister was seated on the opposite side.

Harragan entered with the determined air of a desperate man, and neither gave salutation, nor returned that which was given to him.

"I come," said he, "to ask you where you have hid Ralph Furlong." The man started and changed colour, and then assuming a bold and determined air of defiance, hesitated not to inquire what the farmer meant, who, in reply, as boldly taxed him with the murder. Hard and desperate words succeeded, and the screams of the accused man's sister most likely prevented death, for the farmer, a tall powerful

man, had grasped Murphy so 'tightly by the throat, that a few minutes must have terminated his existence. Although by no means a weakling, he was as a green willow in the hands of his assailant.

In vain did his terrified sister declare that her brother was at home early in the evening, and went to bed before she did. Harragan persisted in his charge; and had it not been for the force of superior numbers, he would have succeeded in dragging him to the next police station; but Irish assistance is much more easily procured against the law than for it, though, I confess, in this instance, it was hard for those who did not know all the circumstances to determine whose part to take, for Harragan was under the influence of such strong excitement, that he acted more like a maniac, "hal a man in the possession of his senses.

Having failed in his first object, that of dragging Steve Murphy to justice himself, he mounted his horse, and laid before the nearest magistrate sufficient reason why Steve should be arrested, and detained until further inquiries were made; but when the police force sought for him, he was gone!—vanished! as delinquents vanish in Ireland, where hundreds of sober honest men will absolutely know where a villain is concealed, and yet suffer him to escape and commit more crimes, because their prejudices will not suffer them to inform.

Great was the excitement throughout the country, occasioned by this mysterious event. James Harragan lived but for one object, that of bringing the murderer to justice. This all-engrossing desire seemed to have absorbed even his affection for his child, that is to say, he would stroke her hair, or press her now colourless cheek to his bosom, and then, turning away with a deep sigh, go on laying down some new plan for the discovery of poor Ralph's murderer. Every body said that Sydney was dying, but her father did not seem to observe that her summer had ceased, when its sun was at the hottest, and its days at the longest, and that the rose was dropping leaf by leaf to the earth. Once Sydney attempted to take the produce of her dairy, which her kind friend Essy tended with more care than her own, to the market.

"If they don't notice me," she said, "I'll do bravely; you'll tell them, Essy, to never heed me." And so Essy did, but it would not do. No prudential motive yet was ever sufficiently strong to restrain the sympathy of the genuine Irish. Twenty stout arms were extended when her car stopped at the corner of the market-place to lift the pale girl off. There was not a woman in the square that did not leave her standing, and crowd round the *widowed* bride. It would have been as easy to turn the fertilising waters of the Nile, as to turn that torrent of affection. The young girls

sobbed, and could not speak for tears; but those tears fell upon Sydney's hands, and moistened her cheeks; it was refreshing to them, for she herself had long ceased to weep; hers were the only dry eyes in the crowd. The mothers prayed that God might bless her, and "raise her up again to be the flower of the country."

"Never heed, Sydney, darlint; sure you've the best wishes of us all, and the prayers of the country."

"And the double prayers of the poor," exclaimed a knot of beggars, who had abated their vocation to put up their petitions in her favour.

Sydney could have borne coldness or neglect, but kindness overpowered her, and she was obliged to return, leaving her small merchandise to Essy's care.

Every one said that Sydney was hastening to her grave, but still her father heeded it not; no blood-hound ever toiled or panted more eagerly to recover the scent which he had lost, than did the farmer to trace Steve Murphy's flight; it was still his absorbing idea, both by day and by night. Had it not been for the exertions of his sons, his well-cultivated farm would have gone to ruin. His health was suffering from this monomania; the flesh shrank daily from his bones; and the healthy jocund farmer was changing into a gigantic skeleton. The priest talked to him, Mr

Herrick reasoned with him, but all to no purpose.

Time passed, and James Harragan entered his cottage as the sun was setting. He had stood for the last hour leaning against the post of his gate, apparently engaged in watching the sparrows flying in and out of their old dwelling-places in the thatch. His sons had prepared his supper, and he sat down mechanically in his old place; the two lads whispered for some time together at the window, when suddenly Harragan inquired "what they thus muttered for?" The youths hesitated to reply.

"Let me know what it was!" he exclaimed. "I'll have no whispering, no *cochering*, no hiding and seeking in my house. Boys, there's a hell at this moment burning in yer father's breast! Look, I never could kill one of them small birds that destroy the roof above our heads, without feeling I took from the innocent thing the life I couldn't give; and yet, what does that signify? Isn't *my* hand *red* at this time of speaking with that boy's blood? Red—it's red hot—hissing red with the blood of Ralph Furlong. It is as much so as if I did it. And why?—because I held on at the mystery that shades the guilty, and hurries on the innocent to destruction—*because I wouldn't inform!* Now, mind me, boys, I'll have nothing but *out* speaking; no whispering; where there's that sort of secrecy, there's sin

and the curse. "What war you whispering?" he added, in a voice of thunder.

"We war only saying, sir," replied the elder, "that we wonder Sydney and Essy ain't back."

"Back! Why, where is my little girl—where is Sydney?"

"She took a thought this morning, sir," he answered, "and we don't like to say against her, that she'd walk from Ferry Carrig Bridge to where HE parted from his brother, and took Essy with her on the car as far as the bridge; it's a notion she had."

"My colleen!—my pride!—my darlint!" he ejaculated, much moved, "and I not to know this! Yer mother little thought, when she made ye over to *me* before death, made *her* over to the holy angels, what would happen. And ye didn't tell me, because ye thought I didn't care! Well, I forgive ye—I forgive ye, boys! I didn't neglect her though, for all that: my heart was set on another matter. There is but one thing she can spake on, one thing I can spake on—and it is better we shouldn't—*but*, and when she does *look* at me, though my little girl strives to keep it under, there is in her eyes what says, 'if ye had spoken the truth long ago, it's a happy wife I'd be now instead of——' Oh, God!—oh, God!" he exclaimed passionately, "that I should have suffered such a snake to fatten on the land, when I could have crushed him under my

heel! I'd have rest in my grave if I could see him in his. I'll go meet her, boys. You should have gone before." And the farmer stalked forth, and, silently mounting his cob, proceeded on the road to Ferry Carrig.

There are mysteries around us, both night and day, for which it would be difficult indeed to account; and the impulse that drew Sydney that morning to the banks of the Slaney, was, and ever must be, unaccountable.

"Nurses," she said to her faithful friend Essy, after they crossed the bridge, and, quitting the coach-road, made unto themselves a path along the bank; "nurses like you, Essy, may be called the brides'-maids of death, and you have been my nurse all through this sickness." Essy afterwards said she did not know what there was in those words to make her cry, but she could not answer for weeping. The two girls wandered on, Sydney stopping every now and then to look into the depths and shallows of the river, and prying beneath every broad green leaf and clump of trees that overhung its banks. More than once they sat down, and more than once did Essy propose their return, but Sydney went on, as if she had not spoken. At last they came to a species of deep drain, almost overgrown with strong, tall, leafy, water plants, that was always filled when the tide was full in. Essy sprang lightly over it, and then turning a little way up to where it was narrower, she extended her hand

to her feeble friend. Although the gulf was narrow, it was very deep; the root of a tree had formed a natural dam across it, so that much water was retained. As Sydney was about to cross, she cast her eyes beneath, started, and held back. She did not speak, but, with her hand pointed downwards, Essy's shriek rang through the air—the face of Ralph Furlong stared at them from the bottom of the silent pool.

Had she not removed the broad leaves of a huge dock that shaded the water, so that Sydney's footing might be sure, the unconscious girl would have stept without knowing it over her lover's liquid grave. Essy was so overwhelmed with horror, that she ran shrieking towards the highway; several minutes elapsed before she returned with assistance; and then where was Sydney! The faithful girl, in endeavouring to draw his body from the waters, had fallen in; her head was literally resting on his bosom, and her long beautiful hair floating like a pall above them.

They were buried in the same grave!

When Murphy's cottage was searched by the police, the only weapon, if so it could be called, which they discovered, was a broken reaping-hook; this James Harragan had taken to his own house, and in the folds of poor Ralph's coat, those who prepared him for his earthly grave discovered the missing portion. The farmer was seen to shed no tear over his

daughter, but registered an oath in heaven that he would never take rest upon his bed until he had brought the murderer to justice. Within a week after, he relinquished his farm to his sons, and it is believed he has journeyed to foreign lands in pursuit of one, who, in the first instance, escaped justice through James Harragan's own weak and almost wicked perseverance in a wrong cause. Years have passed since the melancholy event occurred, and no tidings have ever reached the county relative to Harragan or the murderer. Well, indeed, may he remember Mr Herrick's warning. The farmer had, by withholding his information, refused to pluck out the arrow which an unseen hand had planted in the bosom of an excellent and industrious man, and the same power had been employed to overthrow his happiness for ever!

WHAT UNION CAN DO.

It is strange how, amid all the changes and chances of life, the recollection of and affection for the scenes of childhood remain unaltered. More brilliant and beautiful prospects open upon us; we climb higher mountains, traverse more expansive seas, look over deeper and wider valleys, yet our affections are with the homes of our youth. I believe that this feeling is more intense when early days have been spent in the seclusion of the country; the eye is not then distracted by a continued varying of objects; there is leisure to number the heart's pulsations; feelings have time to take root, to spring up, to grow and strengthen; there is day by day a converse with nature, a communion with God; sounds, and sights, and miracles, nature's moving miracles by sea and land, stamp their impress on the mind; and yet city memories are frequently as strong, though altogether different, inferior I had almost called them.

The love and remembrance of place of birth, form one of the strongest and most enduring

of human affections, for it is associated in feeling with scenes of infancy and the recollection of early attachments and sympathies. Let me go where I will, or write upon whatever subject I may, I find my heart turning to the home of my childhood. All natural and happy thoughts are wound up with it; if I think of the ocean, the billows that laved the beach of our little bay roll before me; of trees, those that shadowed my childhood's paths seem to wave above my head; of music, the peal of the old organ that stood in the hall, and was generally played during the twilight of the summer evenings, swells upon mine ear. And when I want to illustrate a subject, what numbers of characters and topics crowd upon me—all drawn from the same source! A sea-side neighbourhood, with its fleet of fishing-boats, has abundant new incident to add to the stock always on hand in an extensive parish. Unless the heart is shut against the sympathies *of its own kind*, there *is* nothing, there *can* be nothing, approaching to dulness in a country neighbourhood. To me, it is the town that is as a "howling wilderness;" the thousands that crowd its streets, and upon whose faces you look without meeting one answering glance, tell you that you are alone in the vast universe of human beings. Oh! how bitterly I felt this when first we came to reside in London; how earnestly did I long, again and again, for the air and freedom, the

freshness and the friendliness of those warm-hearted peasants, who, for the love they bore my kindred, never met me without a blessing. How sweetly does the remembrance of these wayside prayers come upon me, a remembrance which I would not exchange for the loudest public praise that ever echoed to human ears. And does not all this prove the depth and earnestness of early associations, the strength of early affections; and ought it not to teach a lesson to parents, on the necessity of seeing that the first objects presented to the young should be well chosen with reference to the future; does it not prove how very needful it is to *know*, in the strictest term, the character of those who associate with youth, that so no impressions of an injurious kind should be communicated at a time when they are certain to be retained? But I am digressing from my subject—creeping into a topic towards which my heart and mind are always turned, when, in fact, I ought to be occupied in portraying the difference which existed between the bringing up of “Easy Jack Cummins” and “Hard” Tom Hartigan; two men as different as can well be imagined, and yet both deserving the epithet of “good-hearted fellows.”

Easy Jack’s father was also an easy Jack. His landlord could do nothing with him. Although the rage for improvement was not by any means what it is now, still the landlord wished to improve; but Easy Jack—I cannot

say the first, for the race is coeval with Irish existence—but Easy Jack the elder had no taste that way.

“Jack, is Jack at home?” he inquired one morning.

“No, yer honour,” said his wife, rubbing the dirt into her face with her dirty *praskeen*.

“Yes, daddy’s down below,” screamed one urchin. “No, daddy’s up above,” shouted another. “He’s gone to the mill,” said a third. “He’s asleep in the room,” said a fourth. And that was generally the truth. Easy Jack Cummins senior loved his ease, and all his children pulled different ways. At last the landlord succeeded in forcing Jack to break cover; and after sundry reproofs on the score of idleness, and touching the necessity for truth, “Jack,” said the landlord, “if you will unite with Andy Mullins and Roger Dacey, they will assist in draining the three acre which is divided amongst you; and instead of it’s being nothing but a marsh for more than half the year, it will be a most useful piece of ground.”

“Maybe yer honour would be thinking of raising the rint on us, thin,” said the fellow, looking shrewdly into the landlord’s face.

“No,” he answered; “on the contrary, I will forgive you all a year’s rent.”

“God bless yer honour! that’s mighty good of you. Well, sir, I’ll see about it, and spake to Andy and Roger.”

WHAT UNION CAN DO.

The landlord, however, from past experience, still doubting, said all he could to urge Jack to combine with others in what would have been a mutual service, and to impress upon his mind that where there is not sufficient power in individual exertion, nothing aids a cause but combination. A month passed over without any thing having been done to the field, and again the landlord visited his tenant.

"Well, Jack, how is it that the field is in such a state?"

"The wather, is it, yer honour? Sure that's the way it always was. I believe Ireland bates all the counthries on the face of the earth for wather, plaise yer honour."

"But you told me you were going to join Andy and Roger in draining the field."

"Well, I put it to yer honour, what call have I to their share of the land. And sure if I drain my piece, it's theirs will have the good of it."

"And if they drain theirs, yours will have the good of it."

"Well, that's thrue; but sure, yer honour, my father left it the way it was in his time, and my mother always found it mighty convanient for rearing young ducks and blaiching flax, and I'll let it alone *till the boys grow up*, and then maybe we'll do it ourselves."

But the children grew up with the same indifference to the wisdom of mutual assistance,

and the field, at least Jack's part of it, was a literal slough the last time I saw it. Easy Jack the first had hoped to make his eldest son a farming labourer like himself—but no; he would be a shoemaker, and a shoemaker he was.

When the poor resist all plans for mutual assistance, their power weakens with each succeeding generation, and Jack Cummins the shoemaker is worse off than Jack Cummins who would not help to drain the farm. I shall revert to him again, but must now show the difference in the bringing up of "Hard Tom;" indeed, in this, also, the son was the counterpart of the father.

Old Tom was the first of his race who manifested a decided character. What he desired to do, he would do well, and it seemed marvellous what he accomplished by judicious combination, both abroad and at home. He had not even the advantage of possessing an acre of ground; but whenever others wanted help, it was sure to be given, and in the most judicious manner.

He brought up his children to help each other, both because it was necessary and because it was right; and whenever any little work for the public good, as well as his own individual benefit, was going forward, old Tom Hartigan's Head, and old Tom Hartigan's hand, which were both of the strongest, were sure to be ready on the instant. Nothing

could be more opposite than the theory and practice of these two men, and I must now show the fate of their descendants. 'Easy Jack Cummins' the second, would, as I have said, be a shoemaker, and he had brought up his children, or rather nature had brought them up, to run wild about the country, to the destruction of every well-built ditch, every furze fence, every tree, every bird's nest in the parish. Never were such a wild and wilful set as the young Jack Cumminses; if you heard a huge long-backed pig squeeling at the top of its voice, and discovered two or three children mounted thereon, shouting and hurraing louder than the pig itself, be sure they were some of the Jack Cumminses; if the young quicks in your hedge were converted into firewood, the Jack Cumminses were truly to blame; if a riot ensued, which enticed the old and the young to take part in the "shindy," the Jack Cumminses were surely the ringleaders. At first they were merry, rosy, wild, laughing rogues; they then grew into troublesome daring boys, and wilful slatternly girls. One would not dig the potatoes; another would not bind the shoes; another would not be a shoemaker, but would be a wheelwright; and because there was no money to make him so, he would not do any thing required of him. Another would go to sea; another would do nothing but follow blind Beesom the fiddler, and dance jigs.

The whole family pulled different ways; and the consequence was, that Easy Jack Cummins, and his no less easy wife, were obliged, as long as they were able, to pay for the assistance in their business which their children could have rendered them, if they had been, like the bundle of sticks, united; but as Jack's neighbour, Thomas Hartigan, said, and his father had not only taught him to read, but placed one or two good books in his way, "Easy Jack Cummins brought the sticks together, but had not strength to tie them up." This is often, particularly in Ireland, a grievous parental fault; they suffer their children to run wild; they do not consider that the strongest and best lessons can be taught in almost infancy, when the mind will receive any impression, and retain it. "Easy Jack" used to say, "Ah, thin, let the little fellow have his own way; *sure he has no sense.*" But the "little fellow," when he had sense, was so accustomed to have his own way, that he would not give it up. Now, this was the case with all the little fellows, and "female fellows;" all in Easy Jack's household pulled, as I have said, different ways; all but one, and that poor boy was nearly an idiot—"a natural," as he was poetically called by his neighbours, who also designated him "Black Barney" on account of the darkness of his complexion. While his brothers and sisters wearied their parents' hearts by wildness

and neglect, "Black Barney's" lustreless but affectionate eyes were the light of his father's house, his inarticulate voice the music which gladdened his mother's heart. He gloried in a shoemaker's apron, and would brandish an awl as if it were a sword; he would wax the ends for his father, and card tow for his mother; and though he could not speak distinctly, he could sing snatches of old ballads; and sing he would, in rain or sunshine, all the same, and dance uncouthly, but still it was dancing. He would even undertake to chastise his brothers and sisters when they would not work; and if his father seemed worn out with his endeavours to support his careless family, the poor idiot wrung his hands, and tears coursed each other down his lubber cheeks. Poor creature, he possessed just sufficient intelligence to know what is wrong, but not enough to render him useful to his fellow beings.

The misapplication of intellect incurs far greater penalty and blame than its absence; the reckless progeny of Easy Jack Cummins, which, if united by the bands of love and industry, could have scared poverty from the door, were scattered away, and two of the sons only returned to their native cottage when they wanted money or food. The old man's connections dropped off one by one; there was no *uniting* principle there; and the last time I saw the old shoemaker, he had

been to Thomas Hartigan's mill to beg a little meal for his wife, who was dying. Black Barney was rolling along the road before his father, like a huge hedgehog—now singing one of his old songs, then weeping bitterly for *hunger*, and, as he said, "*Murning* that God had made his broders widout a heart."

Look now at the other picture: thank God, if there is shade, there is also sunshine in this world. Tom Hartigan, the second, is a fine specimen of the chief stick of the bundle, round which all the little sticks are tied.

Tom—and I regret to say there were not a few of his neighbours who called him *Hard* Tom, a cognomen he acquired from his prudence, a virtue which Irishmen in his day held in sovereign contempt—Hard Tom began life just in the same way that Easy Jack Cummins did, but with a far different example; Tom ground at another man's mill, while Jack worked another man's leather; but, in process of time, one achieved the dignity of his own last and cabin, and the other rented a wind-mill. What a picturesque old mill it was! perched on the top of the Hill of Graige, and commanding a view which is often, even now, spread out before me in my midnight dreams; the well-cultivated grounds and rich plantations of the old manor-house sloping to the edge of the brimming ocean; the house itself, with its gables and high chimneys; the bay beyond—the bay where the waters of my own

blue sea were ever to me a source of serious yet unspeakable joy; the tower of Hook on its promontory, and nearer still the ruined church of Bannow; for the inland view, there was the bleak black stormy mountain of Forth, rearing its rocks into the very clouds. How fresh and invigorating was the breeze upon that mountain! How fresh that which swept our own hill! How often have I climbed to the old mill on a summer morning, and counted the ships, whose silver sails showed like petrels upon the waves, and wondered when I too should be in a vessel on my way to my mother's country, to that rich and learned England, where I was often told I must go, to study and become steady.

The old mill, if it had been tenanted by any but Tom Hartigan, would have gone to destruction long before; but Tom patched and plastered and kept together its old stones with marvellous affection: and his wife, once when a storm tore the sail to tatters, absolutely mended the rent with her red Sunday petticoat, rather than the mill should stand still, and walked to Waterford to purchase the necessary material for new sails herself. I think the mountain air Tom breathed invigorated his independent and industrious mind tenfold. Tom and Anty began by being the most united couple in the parish.

"How you do slave yourself," observed Mrs Easy Jack Cummins to Anty one evening,

when the young families of both were increasing, as she strayed up the hill from the moor. "How you do slave yourself and that *dawshy* child, keeping it winnowing!—sure it can do no good."

"Yes," replied Anty, "it can; it learns to work, to divide the chaff from the *whate*—in which there is wisdom—when we work; and if poor people are not united in labour, they can't get on."

"Well," said Mrs Easy Jack, "your husband must make enough to keep you all without such slaving. Mine does, and any how I didn't marry to keep my husband."

"I did not marry to keep my husband," was the sensible reply, "but I married to help him; sure we are one in the sight of God and man; and though the hands don't do the work of the head, nor the feet the work of the hands, yet they can all work together for the same purpose; and if two heads are better than one, surely two pair of hands are better than one; even the poor can get over a *dale* of hardship, *if they are united*."

"But where's the good of slaving?"

"Work is pleasure," answered Anty Hartigan, "if a body has a mind to make it so. Sure it's the greatest pleasure in life to me to help Tom, the craythur! If he works hard, wouldn't it be a sin for me to be idle?—and as to the child——"

"The idea," interrupted Mrs Easy Jack

Cummins, "the idea of buying a sieve, a morsel of a sieve, for such a babby as that to winnow with! Sure that was throwing away a day's earning."

"But the child couldn't be at my foot all day doing nothing; and if he wasn't doing good, he'd be doing harm; and one day's earning is well spent to lay the foundation of an industrious life, please God!" replied Anty, adding, "how do you keep your young ones quiet?"

"I don't look to do it. Sure the world will be hard enough on 'em by'n by; it's the least they may have their fling a bit now. I didn't marry to slave," she repeated.

"Where there's love," said Anty, pushing back her hair from her heated brow, "there may be labour, but no slavery; the being *united* in the work is itself a blessing."

"Setting a case, you didn't love Tom, and he didn't love you, what would you do?"

"Ah, *bathershin*!" laughed the young wife; then added, "but, in earnest, if I didn't, that would not put me past my marriage agreement; I should work all the same, though it would be with a heavy heart instead of a light one; and if he didn't love me, why," her voice faltered, "why, I'd try to help him twice as much, just to *get back his love*; sure that would be both right and wise, for the comfort of doing my duty would be the only comfort I'd have left. And now. Mrs Cummins,

avourneen, don't take it ill of me if I tell you what my mother told me, not exactly to fret or contradict a young child, but to turn its mind to useful employment; to rule it by love, but to rule; or by'n by the little craythur that lay on your bosom may stab yer heart. Above all, keep children employed; it keeps them together *like the bundle of sticks*, and then they are sure to prosper." That Mrs Cummins did not heed this admirable advice, I have already shown; and the contrast between the two families, as their respective children grew up, was great indeed.

The miller's cottage was like a bees' nest; two sons helped in the mill; the girls winnowed, and made and mended; the others were always employed as best suited their age and knowledge; and though labour in that part of the country is badly paid, according to the rate of English remuneration, yet provisions were at that time, and still are, cheap. • Tom Hartigan began life poor; he will die rich. To use his own words, "Single-handed, I might have struggled on like my neighbours, if my wife had not helped me. . . We began by being really united, and finding the power that it gave us, we taught the children the advantage we felt. If little Bat (that was the youngest) wanted to make a toy-boat, Nelly would stitch the sails, Jem fit the cordage, Terry splice the timbers, and all would help to set it afloat; and then I'd say, 'See, now, how quick that

was done, because you war united; if Nelly refused to stitch the sails, Jem to fix the cordage, and Terry to splice the timbers, Bat, honey, how long would it be before you'd have had your ship afloat? Though that's but a play toy, the lesson is the same through life. Thank God! the mill has never wanted grist, and now I'm a farming miller, I grind a dale of corn that my boys have thrashed and sown, and my girls have reaped and bound; and there's a warm corner for the poor natural. Black Barney, whose family are scattered like chaff before the wind." And my belief is, that if Irishmen were united, at home and abroad, they'd carry the world before them. So the heavens above look down, with the sunny beams of encouragement, on *United Irishmen!*

THE END.

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